



NEWSLETTER

Volume 11, Number 2

February, 2013

From our president, Stephanie Fischer ilovtrav@aol.com:

Happy winter everyone! The groundhog said only 6 more weeks of winter, but I think he lied. We had our specialty show last weekend at the Meadowlands in Secaucus, and because of the storm, the entire show committee could not get off Long Island to be there. The AKC and Rau dog shows stepped in, and Carol Brown graciously offered to fill in and judge. Our own judge was never able to leave England. We hear the show went off without a hitch and all the entrants were very glad we did not cancel. Thank you to the entire show committee for all your hard work and many hours on the telephone.

We had our holiday party at the home of Barbara Parker in December, and as always a fun time was had by all! Word has it that people were too passive with the Chinese auction. There is always next year.

Our membership renewal is starting again for this year. The application will be sent out in a separate email. Please be proactive in sending your renewals back to Ellen Padilla.

We will be holding our annual dinner and general membership meeting to announce the new board on Friday, April 19. Our

guest speaker will again be Dr. Ellen Leonhardt. Dinner will be at Jani's Chinese Restaurant in Hicksville. I will be sending out a separate email with the reservation form. Ellen is always a very informative speaker and loves to take questions from the floor. I think we can all learn something from her. This meeting is also a perfect place to discuss the direction in which the general members would like to take this club. As always, it is a handful of people that make a club work. I would love to see an increase in the handful working this year. Us old timers are getting a bit tired. We will be asking for more volunteers this year for a few of our committees.

On a lighter note, for those who participate in Facebook, we have been having fun posting pictures of our dogs doing various things. One of our club members purchased a cave bed from Drs. Foster and Smith for his V. He posted a cute picture, and within that weekend, Foster and Smith had to be inundated with extra large cave bed purchases. I was one of the people who bought two. We are now all posting pictures of the brave dogs that actually sleep inside the cave. Our facebook page is Vizsla Club of Long Island under groups.

Dover Saddlery experienced the same sort of thing when a person who posts on the vizslatalk @yahoo chat site said they were having a sale on dog coats. The polartec coats were made like horse blankets and for \$8.99 they were a steal! My three dogs proudly wear them. Dover sold out and

I think it was totally due to the Vizsla social media.

In closing, please remember you can always reach out and contact me. I don't bite!

Warm regards,

Stephanie

IBRAGS, IBRAGS, IBRAGS

From Sunday February 10 to Tuesday February 12 we had a very exciting couple of days.

On Sunday February 10 MM' n Moramore The Beat Goes On (Melody) at her debut in flyball, Melody got her first title FD (Flyball Dog) racing with the "Great Balls of Fire" team. It consisted of Jack (Border Collie), Skippy (Mix), Melody (Vizsla), and Tucker (Jack Russell). Dogs must be a year old before they can be in the racing lanes and Melody got her title at 1 year 11 days old. We are so proud of this little girl. She had a blast at the flyball tournament.

On Tuesday February 12 CH MM' n Moramore Fly Me To The Moon (Ellie) went to Westminster to show her heart out and that she did. She was our little surprise. Miss Ellie took Select Bitch at Westminster over some very nice specials. She was the youngest Champion in the ring. We are so proud of this little girl and what she has accomplished in such a short time. This is a day we all will remember.

So both girls made us proud, one in the performance ring and the other one in the breed ring.



Melody and Ellie are out of Ch Starfire The Red Rocket (Sammy) and Moramore's Red Hot Reba CDX RAE JH MX MXJ XF ONYX (Reba).

Joe Diaz, Kathie Amore and Marianne Megna own both girls.

Regards, *Kathie Amore*



There's a New Kid in Town!

Ron & Ellen Padilla would like to announce the arrival of our newest member of the family! "Jackson Blue's Vizion" (call name Jackson) born on December 4, 2012 out of Foxfire Vizslas (dam) & Busch Vizslas (sire). Ellen and I flew out to Chicago on American Airlines on Saturday February 1st, drove 140 miles round trip to Winnebago, Illinois, to pick Jackson up, then flew back with Jackson (all 3 of us flew First Class, yes he was in the cabin with us) to NY that same day.

He is absolutely great, and his Uncle Cody (our Chocolate Lab and Vizsla unofficial mascot) has been like a built in baby sitter! Cody, Sophie, and Jackson are getting along famously.



His training in our indoor Dog Training Room has been going great as well. He is very food motivated (unlike Sophie, miss picky) and is responding well to "sit," "come," and "leave it." He has also been introduced to birds using the Gun Dog Supply's quail wings, and is already holding point well, although getting the wing back has been a bit of a challenge! Here is a photo!



For all of you Winter Walkers, we plan to start back up at the end of March or early April (Sophie has been in season) when Jackson will be done with all of his shots and ready for the outside world!

Proud Parents, *Ron & Ellen Padilla*





RESCUE REPORT

In the past month rescue has definitely picked up. Within a two-day period, we had three dogs come into our rescue program to be fostered. Thank you to all of you who so generously reach out to me with your offers to help! I am happy to say that Coco and Louie (who is now renamed Parker) are happy in their new homes, and Remington is happy in foster taking 2 mile hikes everyday with his three Vizsla buddies.

Some of you met Kody, who was being fostered by Nancy Tarbox at our fun day this summer. Nancy is my counterpart in Central New England. We were able to pair one of our applicants with Kody, who is now living a wonderful life in Sea Cliff on the water. It is a perfect place for him, as he was used to running the beach in Massachusetts.

This is rescue at its best; placing the right applicant with the right dog, even out of your territory. All of the rescue coordinators know each other and share dogs and families. Nancy and I have formed a really nice friendship also. It is great when you can work with someone who truly understands where you are coming from.

Enjoy the rescue stories that follow. If anyone is interested in becoming a foster family in the future, please email me at ilovtrav@aol.com.

Stephanie



Mia's Story

(Pronounced Mya)

On Saturday, December 29, 2012, our newly adopted 11-year-old Zen dog, a beautiful Vizsla from New York, arrived here in Hunterdon County, Stockton, New Jersey. Mia walked into our home and our hearts that day and has become an integral part of our farm. We have a herd of 46 alpacas and 4 llamas, 5 barn cats (all neutered and spayed), a rough-coated Jack Russell terrier named Boomer, a chocolate Labrador named Abenaki2, two Chihuahuas named Left and Right, and now our dear Mia, a Vizsla!

Several years ago we were introduced to KatieBelle, another rescued Vizsla, and it

was a relationship that lasted only a couple of years, but she had a profound impact on us. She was mostly deaf and partially blind, but she was the sweetest, most gentle dog we had ever owned, and she was 12 or 13 years of age, and died within 2 years. I knew that one day I would want to find another Vizsla, but I couldn't bring myself to look because I felt that KatieBelle was truly irreplaceable.

When I met Stephanie Fischer online, and then had several phone conversations with her about adopting a Vizsla, I began to feel as though it might be possible to "fall in love again!"

After having to put off the adoption of the first animal Stephanie found, when Mia's story was told to me, it was only a matter

of timing that kept us apart for a few months...and then the big day arrived!



Mia walked onto the farm and has melded with our other dogs after only a few “words” with them. She won the first argument with our 65-lb. Lab and made it clear what her boundaries are! She was emaciated at 38 lbs., ribs sticking out, malnourished due to mal-absorption problems, and had to begin treatment for Lyme disease, but she began to flourish immediately. She has gained weight and is an amazingly gentle girl, who is still battling intestinal problems, but she has not once had an accident in the house and obeys almost all commands. We have learned that her hunting instincts are very sharp and she has only taken off running when rabbits or birds dart out of the bushes and across the yard. Luckily, she has never disappeared, and we are pleased that she does return quickly

when she hears her name spoken loudly and firmly.

What a blessing she has been in the past month and a half, and we look forward to getting her immune system bolstered and her dietary challenges remedied. As you will see in the picture of her with three of her housemates, she rules the roost and has her own spot on the sofa. Naptime at Abenaki Acres is a sight to behold!



Thank you to Stephanie for bringing us together with our Mia, who we call our Zen dog because she brings such serenity and love to our farm. I know KatieBelle is smiling down on all of us!

Bill and Elizabeth Johnson



Coco’s Story

My first Vizsla passed away at age six from lymphoma. Her name was Crash--a very unlady like name for quite a lady. She was such a special part of my life. Crash was there to lick my tears away when my dad died; she was there when I started dating a new man and he became a fiancé. A Vizsla made of mascarpone sat on top of my wedding cake. She was the first one at the door to welcome first my

daughter and then my son home from the hospital. She was diagnosed the same month I found out I was pregnant with my son. As anyone who has experienced the loss of a dog knows, the pain you experience gives you pause before you are ready to open up your heart again, but there was a hole.

I was searching the adoption sites for Vizslas when I encountered the rescue group out of the Boston area run by Nancy Tarbox. Off went my application. I was in love with the dog posted on the site but she had already been adopted. A second dog almost came into our lives but it did not work out. Third time was the charm and Coco entered our lives.



Nancy Tarbox, who never seems to stop working, asked if we were interested in a nine- month old puppy displaced by Hurricane Sandy. My response was one word: "YES!" She sent my information on

to the Vizsla rescue coordinator who was placing the puppies.

Coco has a guardian angel and she lives on Long Island. She doesn't have wings or a halo...well, at least we didn't see it when we met her but, who knows for sure? Stephanie Fischer is Coco's Guardian Angel. She is part mother, part Yiddish Grandmother, part psychiatrist and part Vizsla rights activist who tirelessly works for our Vizslas. She was with us all through the process and checks in to make sure all is well. We know she is there for us if we need anything...that's what Guardian Angels do.



I believe what is meant to be will be. We weren't meant to have any other dog but Coco. Two weeks ago she came to our home with her tail tucked under, timid and not playful. She is now running our household--are any of you surprised?

She has made my moody kids laugh and think of someone other than themselves. ☺ My grumpy husband is smiling and talks about Coco as if he birthed her. ☺ She has brought laughter and pure love into our home, but I am the happiest of all of us. Not for what she has done for me but for what she has done for our family.

Our lives here have changed and we will be forever grateful to all those that helped Coco along the way to find us. Thank you.

Colleen McDonald



Parker's Story

As we all know, many people on Long Island and New Jersey really suffered a tremendous loss because of Hurricane Sandy. A family in Howard Beach had bought two Vizslas, a brother and sister named Coco and Louie in June 2012 and sadly their home was damaged because of Sandy. They found it too difficult to keep the puppies so they gave them to a person that did Beagle rescue. Needless to say, Vizslas are very different from Beagles and he found them too hard to handle and fortunately he contacted Stephanie Fischer for some help. She worked her magic and it was the beginning of a new time in Coco and Louie's lives.



My husband Ron and I have had Vizslas for almost 20 yrs. We had Rylee and her daughter Baylee until last April when Rylee passed away suddenly. It was quite a shock for us and we knew we were not

ready to have another Vizsla right away. Meanwhile, my daughter got married and was in between jobs so she, her husband and their 18-lb. rescue cat moved in with us. Our house was very full now so we didn't really think at all about adding a new dog to the group. A job finally came through for her and the 3 of them moved out the beginning January to start their new life.

The house was very quiet now and when Stephanie sent out a request for foster homes for Coco and Louie we were happy to lend a hand. Another Vizsla club member was kind enough to foster the female so we ended up with Louie. We had fostered rescues before and knew that a new forever home was being considered for him. This is where the most an unexpected thing happened.

Louie came with typical rescue issues--fearful of new surroundings, socializing with two humans, another Vizsla and an elderly cat. Quite a lot for a sad nine-month-old boy to handle. He came to us rather underweight and kind of timid, but with a personality that ignited a new spark for Ron and me. All he wanted was love and lots of affection. He is very smart and best of all, has gotten along really well with seven-year-old Baylee and 16 1/2 year-old Casey (the cat).

We did our best to socialize him and get him used to not being in a crate all the time. It took about three days for us to finally realize that Louie had really touched our hearts. By day four we were hooked. That is how we joined the list of "failed foster" families. This sweet young boy with his big paws and adorable face and personality had found his "forever home."

We renamed him Parker and have been enjoying all the hugs and kisses he gives us. He loves the snow and sleeping by the fireplace. Parker seems to have a nose for hunting which makes Ron very happy. We realized that we were ready for another



Vizsla after all, and it took Parker to bring this new chapter to our lives. We are definitely the fortunate ones.

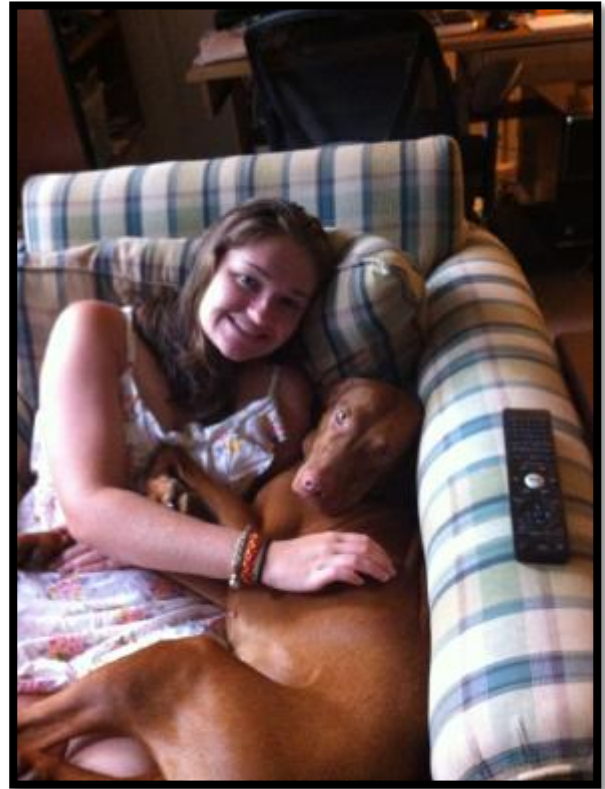
Cathy and Ron Jones

Molly (CT) Update

(Originally named Kristy from Southside; Stephanie and Ray still have Molly, the mother of all the puppies.)

Molly, our beautiful rescue, is learning how to cope with deep snow. Naturally after getting 32 inches of it, we had to dig a path from the door to a little manmade clearing. But within a day and a half she was bounding through the drifts trying to figure out how to find and fetch a thrown snowball. How could it just disappear?

She also discovered that lying in front of the fireplace is the best and warmest spot after playing outside in the snow.



She's doing well at both hand and verbal commands for sit, stay and down, and she's getting more consistent at coming when called or signaled, but she's excellent at curling up her 55+ lbs. next to our daughter Emmie in a big stuffed chair after dropping one of her bones in Emmie's lap as a gift. Often she's on her back with all four paws up in the air. She's truly a sweetheart!

Tom Kelty

SELECTED UPCOMING EVENTS

CONFORMATION

Big Apple Sporting Society, Edison, NJ 3/21
New Brunswick Kennel Club, Edison, NJ 3/22-3
Bronx Co. Kennel Club, Edison, NJ 3/24
Lebanon Co. Kennel Club, Harrisburg, PA 4/12
Harrisburg Kennel Club, Harrisburg, PA 4/13
Mason and Dixon Kennel Club, Harrisburg, PA 4/14
South Country Kennel Club, Warwick, RI 4/27-8
Trenton Kennel Club, W. Windsor Twp, NJ May 5-6

HUNT TESTS

Long Island Pointing Dog Field Trial Club, Riverhead,
NY March 9-10
Vizsla Club of Greater NY, Clarksburg, NJ April 13-14
Long Island German Shorthaired Pointer Club,
Riverhead, NY April 27-8

MULTIPLE EVENTS

Vizsla Club of America National Specialty Events,
Minneapolis, MN, April 29-May 3

For more information, go to:

<http://www.akc.org/events/search/>
<http://vcaweb.org>
<http://www.vcli.net>
<http://www.vcnj.com/>
<http://www.ctvalleyVizslaclub.org/CalendarofEvents.htm>
<http://www.thevcgny.com/Events.html>
<http://www.vccne.net/events.html>
<http://www.lipdc.com/>

<http://www.infodog.com/showinfo/state.htm>

<http://www.raudogshows.com>



To see 12-year-old Austin competing in agility with owner/handler Melanie Miller, go to

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1OsUotIxeq>. He's #4 nationally in NADAC <http://www.nadac.com>.



Jake, one of the Fischer's dogs, asleep in his new dog cave bed.

PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST

There was a discussion recently on the Yahoo VizslaTalk list about socializing a 4-month old Vizsla puppy. Breeder Karen Lake posted the following and has given us permission to reprint it. *The list may also be helpful to new adopting owners of under socialized rescues.*

Different Types of People

- Men
- Women
- Boys
- Girls
- Shuffling people
- Slouched people
- People with glasses
- People on crutches
- People with walking sticks
- People with walking frames
- People walking strangely
- Babies
- Parties
- People on roller blades
- Joggers
- Wheelchairs
- Heavy people
- Thin people
- Tall people
- Short people
- People costumes
- People in big coats
- People with beards
- People with sunglasses
- People of all races
- Bald people
- People exercising (running, jogging, star jumps, etc)
- Children and babies
- Dancing people
- Busking people

Note: It is really important that your puppy interacts with kids of different ages. Please go out of your way to find children who will follow directions well and not hurt or scare your pup by accident.

Consider having as many new people as you can

find give your puppy high value treats. Dogs who like kids, tend to be good with them.

Puppies need to meet and interact with at least 100 people before they are 20 weeks old. If you do not have access to that many people, consider hanging out with your puppy at a busy shopping area. You need to do that more than one time. Make field trips fun.

Different surfaces

- Beanbags
- Tile floors
- Wood Floors
- Bubble wrap
- Different walking surfaces
- Wobbly bridges
- Heights
- Agility Equipment
- Gravel
- Child's plastic sled
- White floors
- Leaves
- Metal street grates
- Plastic tarp
- Cookie tin
- Walk through a ladder on the ground
- Tippy board
- Mud
- Puddles
- Footbridge

Note: Be creative here! Your puppy will not need to walk on all of the above. Good breeders will have already done this. You can pile the treats on different weird surfaces and gently encourage your pup to step on. Never force your puppy to go on something. Help shape the puppy to think that this is their idea.

Water

Sprinklers
Hoses
Being wet by the hose
Water
Shower
The beach
The bath
Swimming pools
People swimming
Water feature
Rain

Note: Just because you got your puppy in the winter does not mean that you don't have to go out of your way to find things that they will see in the summer.

Places

Airport
Skate park
Bus depot
Bus stop
Train station
Shopping malls
Loud fun places (fairs)
Football game
Supermarket
School
Coffee shop
Building site
The gym
Tennis game
Office
Speed way
Place with crowds
Main roads
Your place of work
Playground

Note: Many large stores like Home Depot and Lowes allow puppies to come and train. Check with your local store before going. This will cover many things on your list. You need to go more than one time!

Moving and making noise

Lawn mower
Bikes
Children playing with various toys
Shopping carts
Vacuum cleaner
Skateboards
Scooters
Bus
Train
Tractors
Ride on lawn mowers
Bob cats
Cars
Hammering
Trucks
Motorbikes
Chainsaws
Forklift
Helicopters
Airplanes
Sirens
Hair dryer
Suitcases
Go Karts
Remote control cars
Ceiling fans
Mirrors
Glass sliding doors
Boats
Automatic doors
Garage doors
Construction sites
Dremel (nails)

Noises

Fireworks
Storms (e.g. thunder and lightning)
Parties
Computer dial up
Musical instruments (piano, guitar, saxophone)
Gunshot
Cheering
Yelling
Singing
School bell
Sound effects CD and/or on line

Saucepans
Radio
Lawn mower
Loud noises
The sound of a carbonated drink opening

Note: Fireworks, please do not take your puppy to fireworks. If you know a holiday is coming like the 4th of July, be ready to make it a positive experience with lots of yummy treats, your jolly voice and soothing music. If your puppy lives with a noise phobic dog, consider having the pup in a different location during these holidays. You can also find noises online that you can condition your puppy to. Start at low levels, of course.

Situations

Leash
Harnesses
Muzzle
Loom overhead
Collar grabs
Opening mouth
Cutting nails
Grooming (as appropriate to the breed)
Clippers
Being tethered
Having ears cleaned
Having eyes cleared
Having every part of the body handled
Being picked up
Teeth cleaning
Being carried on a stretcher
Being bandaged
The vet*

*Note: Please make arrangements to stop in to your vets several times for some treats and love at times when your puppy does not have an appointment.

Weird things

Big plastic objects
Plastic bags
Balloons
Umbrellas
Mirrors
Big balls

Thrown things
Shopping trolleys
Baby strollers
Fast movement
Kids toys
Wind socks
Brooms
Vacuum cleaner
The wind
The wind blowing bushes/trees
Flags
Balls and frisbees
Tents
Flashlights

Travel

Escalators
Ride on Elevators
The car
Planes

Other animals

Puppy school
Big dog
Little dog
Shaggy dog
Smooth dog
Farm animals
Bull breed dogs
Rabbits
Birds

Note: Your dog needs to see a lot of dogs that do not look like him. Bully breeds can be hard to read and without early experience, dogs can think they are being threatened by them.

Karen Lake
AKC Breeder of Merit
Moonlight Vizslas
www.moonlightvizslas.com



PHOTOS FROM OUR LAST HECKSHER PARK WALK



MEMBER PROFILE: THE BAUM FAMILY

After losing our beloved pet Murphy, a Jack Russell Terrier, in 2008, my husband and I decided that we would not be getting another dog. After much pleading and begging by our daughters we had to reconsider our decision and began the search for the perfect breed and pet for our family. A friend and co-worker of my husband shared his love of his dog Mia, a Vizsla. While we had never met Mia we knew we had to research the Vizsla since she sounded like the perfect fit for our young and active family.

We wanted a dog that was smart, affectionate and loving, a dog that was energetic yet gentle, a dog that was low maintenance and didn't require lots of grooming and who didn't leave puffs of hair floating throughout the house. With the Vizsla we had found our PERFECT dog. Yogi is everything on our wish list and SO MUCH MORE.



He is more loving and affectionate than any dog we have ever known. He is gentle and happy and OH SO FUNNY. Not a day goes by that he isn't making us laugh out loud. Whether it's his clownish personality

or just the way he sits or sleeps (like a seal or rubber chicken) he brings us such great JOY. Yogi is a true family dog. He is EVERYONE'S dog and EVERYONE'S best friend. He does not play favorites and is a 53-pound lap dog (he will sit ON anyone, anywhere and anytime he sees fit).



Yogi quickly won over the hearts of our entire family and of all who meet him. Yogi entered our family a little over a year ago yet we cannot imagine our family without him. He has added so much love and laughter to our home. The Vizsla is "one of a kind" and we feel so fortunate to be owners of this beautiful and wonderful breed. The Baum Family (Joan, Mark, Julia, Daria, and Olivia)

Joan Baum

"No matter how little money you have and how few possessions you own, having a dog makes you rich."

From VCLI Member David Glick

FOCUS ON THE FIELD

WHEN & HOW TO CHOOSE A PROFESSIONAL TRAINER OR HANDLER

Andrew Campbell

Like me, when you feel blessed by a well-bred, intelligent, naturally-gifted dog, why would you want to send your dog away to someone else who doesn't love your dog like you do? Why not embrace the journey of training your own dog and learning together? At the other end of the spectrum, using professional trainers and handlers is an expensive investment that should give you a more predictable set of results. If I remember correctly, my friend Joan Heimbach told me that she reckoned that she had spent roughly \$15K towards the Dual Champion title earned by her great dog, DC Fieldfire's High Octane ("Ocky"). Even in the case of a very nice dog like Ocky, titles rarely come cheap or easy.

And of course, there is nothing wrong with training your own dog and accepting that what happens is simply what happens. I largely trained our oldest dog to a Master Hunter title—and I've handled him to several placements in field trials. Is he competent and animated? Sure. Does he have moments of inconsistency? Yes. Is he likely to win a field trial? Is he truly *breathhtaking* to watch? No. And that's fine, but some of what contributes to his generally not-try-awesome performance has been my own inconsistencies and uncertainties.



There is an old adage that you will often 'screw up your first dog'—in fact, that it is your first dog who will teach you how little you know. Owning a second dog with the genetics to be an awesome field trial competitor (and who is still exciting even when he messes up), I have truly come to appreciate the consistency and effort it takes the amateur and the professional alike to mold and campaign a truly talented vizsla.

Professionals can offer you and your dog access to resources (such as birds or training areas) that you might not be able to keep yourself. Professional trainers can also work on a specific skill that you might not be comfortable communicating with your dog. One frequent example, and the one I sent our oldest dog out for, was to be force-fetched. For a dog that has little natural retrieve or for a dog that you need to retrieve with the same consistency that you would ask a dog to 'stay' or 'sit', the force-fetch is a good learning opportunity. However, it involves a level of pressure that some pros don't want their own dogs associating with them, and so they will send their dogs to another pro to get that particular skill done.

What I've learned from being around several pros at field trials, hunt tests, even a Vizsla National Field Trial, is that you should apply the same diligence to finding a professional trainer or handler as you would to finding a tutor for any human child or someone remodeling your kitchen. Background checks, references, interviews, the whole nine yards. Unlike general contractors who in theory need to be licensed in most states, there are no established criteria for "dog trainers."

If you can meet a prospective trainer at their kennel or at a trial, I would encourage you to check out their facilities and equipment. Anyone can spin you a yarn, but how their

dogs act in the kennel or on a stake-out chain and/or how their equipment looks will give you at least as good an idea of how your dog's experience will be. Brand spanking new is fair enough, but for me well maintained and organized is paramount. If I were meeting a pro at a field trial, I'd be really impressed by a professional whose partner or children were also involved—and I don't think that "he's not good with people, but he's great with dogs" is an adequate excuse.

A professional's winning record is certainly something to consider, especially if you have a particular goal in mind, then you have to consider a professional's experience at that level. But in many ways, the truly great dogs that win would probably win under anyone's guidance. And so, if you are able to visit with a pro and watch them work a dog, then maybe ask them to work a dog that in their opinion will take real work. It would be really hard to figure this out, but I am as interested in the dogs that washed out unsuccessfully from a particular professional than I am in all the dogs that succeeded.

If you send your dog away to a trainer or to be campaigned on the field trial or hunt test circuit, ask them if it will be possible to visit your dog and see how they're doing and/or how they will work with you as an amateur handler. For example, I still believe the professional who force-fetched Momo when he said that I shouldn't come visit him in the middle of this process. My being there could actually have created a distraction at a time when my dog needed to understand that his retrieve command was a non-negotiable. All the same I would still be wary of a pro who is inflexible about whether to allow you to run your own dog in amateur stakes at field trials while they are pursuing whatever goal or title you, as the owner, and the professional have determined for the dog. Perhaps you have no intention of ever handling your dog in the field—and that's fine, but one of the marks of integrity in a

professional that I look for is someone who isn't merely committed to training or handling your dog to a title, but also training you, the owner, as to how to handle your dog once they leave that professional. Again, any professional worth their salt in my book, at least, wants to train your dog right the first time and then train you how to handle your dog so you can't undo what they've done. I want a pro who wants to work all my dogs in my lifetime, not work one dog of mine for their entire lifetime, constantly fixing problems.

Be forewarned that any trainer who is as good as the guy who re-modeled your bathroom is probably also going to be in demand. And any trainer worth their salt will tell you if they already have a full string of training dogs—and that any more will mean that your and everyone else's dogs will therefore be spread thin. As much fun as I have training and handling my dogs, there are some great reasons to use some great professional trainers and handlers who can really help you and your dog have more fun together.

Andrew Campbell has spent two summers apprenticing with Bill Gibbons, professional trainer, and handler of 4x VCA National Field Champions and the youngest Dual Champion in the breed, DC AFC Papago Samsson MH CD. He loves bird dogs, even his almost-Field Champion, Widdershins Upwind Jozsi (pictured).



PHOTO OF THE MONTH: "IT'S A BOY!"

JAMES MICHAEL RABY, BORN 1/4/13 @ 12:34 PM, 7LBS, 14OZ & 22 INCHES AND NICO'S BEEN A GREAT BIG BROTHER!. THE PARENTS ARE JENNIFER AND BRIAN RABY. NICO IS A SOUTHSIDE DOG WHO WAS ADOPTED ABOUT 3 YEARS AGO.



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