



SKYLINES

Newsletter of the Skycastle French Hounds



November 2009

Gillian Wiedorn, Editor

Master's Report, Summer/Fall 2009

Our 2009-2010 season began in earnest in June. Walking out and hunting three days a week got the pack in fine shape. White Acres Farm, Bob Berry's, the Hallmans', the Flaggs', the Silbermans', the Cadwaladers', the Theurkaufs', the Wickersham's, and Church Farm School all have had game. Our thanks to them all for letting us use their land for training hunts last summer. Our hard-working staff—Gillian and Paul Wiedorn, Coopie Heisermann, Laura, Nick and Lisa Booth, Patrick Loughran, Sally, Liz and Megan Roberts, and Phyllis Allen—made summer training and exercise really work. Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday hunting and exercise the season through have really made this little pack a team. We have acquired two fine doghounds from the Barths, Larry (sire of Salsa and Sousa) at the May annual meeting, and Checkers (sired by our Riddle) in September. Both are AKC champions and never hunted. Larry has become a fine pack hound, and Checkers is starting to hunt. Quarry had a litter of two males (sired by Larry), Uwchlan and Uproar, on July 22, which are super. Our **Opening Meet and Blessing of the Hounds** at Marsh Creek State Park on October 11 was very special. It marked the start of our 61st season hunting in Chester County. It was great to see Ruth Maconachy and her son Jamie and wife Marjory. Rick Litts was back out and recovering nicely. Hounds worked very well with runs in the racetrack oval to ground and in the center hedgerow to the top of the rise, then two rabbits were run from the crossover hedgerow and the woods above the road to marks. The Wessells' tea was super. The **Bedwells'** on the 18th was again very dry, but hounds had a slew of rabbits along the center pasture hedgerow and three good runs, especially the find and driving run out of the upper power line briar hell from cover strip to cover strip, holding steady on deer and fox.

The Fall Basset Pack Trials were great. The weather varied from dry and warm to rainy, constantly changing. Our three couple on the 23rd October was outstanding, and the longest hunt of the day. Scenting conditions were tough. Several packs hunted to losses with little action before and after us. We started in the center cover strips with no action til we worked up to the back area. Hounds dug in the brush piles and worked through all around, then Sabine, Pampa and Mischief opened strongly. The rest flew to them and drove the rabbit out for a doubling run in and out of several patches of cover, then ran it to the left back side woods where it ran through Bob Dougherty's horse's legs. Quarry led the charge as it doubled back, and the pack ran it to ground in a large brush and log pile. They got a second one going for a short run through two patches and to ground, and then drew left handed towards the center. Pampa spoke, then Daphne and Sabine, and a rabbit exploded back towards the back fence cover with the pack all on in cry as our time ran out. It was a well earned win of the Three Couple Pack Bohemia River Plate, the Carpenter Plate (50% Field and 50% Bench) and first place ribbon. Hounds were impressive. Laura and Nick did a fine job. The next day was the turn of the five couple class. They found the first rabbit in the bank briars below the cabins and ran to a loss, then worked another line for a loop in the bottom along the stream briars and began working the cover below the drive as time ran out. Liz and Megan Roberts did a super job whipping in. Megan's performance earned her the Best Whipper-In Award of the Fall Trials. A fine weekend.

Everyone is welcome to join us on bye days. Call Jim Scharnberg or Gillian Wiedorn Tuesday and Friday for times and locations.

The 61st season is going very well indeed so far, with two new meets added this fall, and new ones we will be exploring on bye day hunts the second half of the season. Please let us know if you have any friends' properties in mind.

We owe our sport to our wonderful landowners.—JFS



Eliot Ramsay Kalmbach

Eliot Ramsay Kalmbach, 24, of Downingtown, a Princeton University senior and a senior whipper in with Skycastle, died September 22 from a fall while hiking with a friend in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. Eliot started whipping in with Skycastle in elementary school and hunted with the pack until the week before his death. His parents gratefully credit his Skycastle friendships with people of all ages and the discipline, teamwork, and camaraderie of the hunt staff as major influences in his life. He brought what he learned at Skycastle with him in adventures all over the world.

Eliot graduated from Downingtown West High School in 2004. An Eagle Scout with Hopewell Troop 8, he spent a summer as a ranger at Philmont Scout Ranch, the Boy Scouts' high-adventure camp in New Mexico. Eliot was an experienced, safety conscious mountaineer and was a member of the Explorers Club of New York. He traveled extensively in the Middle East and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro two summers ago. A geoscience major at Princeton, Eliot took off the spring semester of his sophomore year to intern at the Lee Institute for Japanese Art in Hanford, Calif., and to participate in an archaeology dig in Syria. That fall, he attended the National Outdoor Leadership School in Patagonia, Chile, before returning to Princeton. He took off the spring semester this year to work on a start-up venture. He and other students were developing software that would allow high school students to prepare for SATs by using their iPhones. Over the summer, he studied volcanoes in Russia. Eliot was in Wyoming on his way to Washington state, where he was going to be an intern at Intellectual Ventures in Bellevue. He planned to work all week and hike in the Northwest on weekends before returning to Princeton in January for his final semester.

Eliot lived life to the fullest. His warmth, humor and enthusiasm knew no bounds. He truly made our lives better and brighter. Visit his friends' memorial web site at www.eliotkalmbach.com.