



SKYLINES

Newsletter of the Skycastle French Hounds



Summer 2011

Gillian Wiedorn, Editor

Hunting Report, Summer 2011

Our 2011-2012 season began well in June. Walking out and hunting three days a week has gotten the pack in fine shape. White Acres Farm, George Jefferis's, Bob Berry's, the Hallmans', Church Farm School and Marsh Creek all have had game. Our thanks to them all for letting us use their land for training hunts this summer. Our hard-working staff—Gillian and Paul Wiedorn, Gene Bolt, Dick and Holly Gross, Ginny Beards, Caroline Blondel, Coopie Heisermann, Laura, Nick, Lisa and Henry Booth, and Phyllis Allen—have made this summer's training and exercise really work.

Some mornings were very good indeed. Wednesday 8 June at Jefferis's, hounds got up two rabbits in the tree plantings, and drove the bigger one through to the bottom, crossing over to the hedgerow and back up to a mark. They worked another to a mark in a briar tangle on the far side, then we drew the bottom hedgerow right toward the woods. Salsa spoke deep in the woods, but it smelled strongly of fox. Holly was in position to turn her back. She came back up as a nice cub broke up left toward the power line. They got a nice running rabbit up there that they ran in to the center and accounted for to end the morning. Quarry and Mischief were great as usual, and Uwchlan did very well. The Wiedorns, the Grosses, Gene Bolt, Lisa Booth, Walt Stewart, Wayne Kline and I enjoyed the start of hunting again with the pack. It was a hot morning, and Gillian's watermelon at the end was a life-saver. The hounds inhaled their water bucket. Saturday 11 June at Marsh Creek hounds worked the track oval half way around to get up their first rabbit, a good runner which they drove through to the road and left along the edge to ground in the roadside woods. We drew back to get up a short runner to ground among the briars at the gate, then worked to the center field hedgerow. Hounds worked a couple of short runners, then after drawing to the top and the right side hedge line, they got up a rabbit on the way back in for a nice run along the center hedgerow in and out and to ground to finish up. Young Vesper did very well on her first hunt, along with the usual suspects. Back at the trailer, Dick Gross surprised us with a fine welcome tailgate of iced tea, scones and sticky buns, which was fallen on by Lisa and Henry Booth, Walt Stewart, the Wiedorns, Dick and myself! On Sunday in heavy overcast and occasional sprinkles the Wiedorns, Phyllis Allen and I walked the pack at the farm. Most of the fields are finally cut and it was good to be able to get everyone well stretched. On Wednesday June 15's training hunt at Marsh Creek hounds ran one rabbit to ground in the far upper field hedgerow. Young Victor took a while to settle down to business, but was better by the end of the morning. Saturday June 18 at Bob Berry's we and hounds cooked in heavy humidity, heat and chest high grass. They ran one down the hedgerow from the top of the Pikeland Road end to ground—Salsa almost caught it right in front of me. We finished with a draw through the corn. Young Vesper did very well. Hounds ignored deer both days. Sunday June 19 was a delightfully cool walk around the hills at kennels and we cleared a trail through to the Brandywine for coming walks. Paul Wiedorn is truly an artist with the weed-whacker! Wednesday morning June 22 we train/hunted young hounds at Church Farm, and on Saturday June 25 we hunted at George Jefferis's with short runs on rabbits. On Sunday, we walked at kennels and swam hounds in the Brandywine! Wednesday through Sunday June 29-July 3 we walked and swam hounds at kennels due to the continuing heat and no rain.

Gene Bolt, Phyllis Allen, Dick Gross, the Booths and Walt Stewart did a super job with the pack and kennels daily and the Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday walks July 6 through July 13. Saturday July 16 we hunted at Marsh Creek at 8 am with a 3 couple—two rabbits were found and quickly put to ground. By 9am it was hot, and we took the rest of the pack for a walk and swim back at kennels. We met early all three days 20-24 July at kennels in the heat and walked and swam hounds in the Brandywine. What a wonderful change Wednesday 27 July was. The thermometer was in the low sixties, and we had a hunt at Marsh Creek, 1 rabbit quickly to ground in the oval cover after a short run, and finished with a view and run to ground of a good running rabbit in the point hedgerow. We hunted Saturday morning 30 July at CFS. Two rabbits ran quickly to ground along the hump line next to the running trail below the parking area, and another quick one that Uwchlan ran in the beans to ground. We had a fine morning Sunday with walks and swims. The Valois crew arrived to get Uproar around 10:30 and Pampa met Uproar—many tail wags and smiles all around.

At CFS on August 6th we had dry work on 3 rabbits on the left side, and on the 7th we walked and swam at kennels in the heat. The 10th at Marsh Creek we had runs on 2 rabbits at the entrance side, and one nice run along the L to ground. The 13th at Jefferis's was a fine morning, with 5 rabbits run through the plantings and the bottom woods covers. We had a fine morning's hunting at George Jefferis's on August 20th. It was damp and foggy to start. Our first rabbit was got up at the upper end of the tree plantings by Mischief. The rest joined in and we had a nice run and work to ground along the tree line toward the woods north to a mark in a patch of briar tangle. Drawing back, Quarry got up another in the plantings that they worked to the bottom and back into the holes in the middle. They worked back up the far side to push out another bunny that ran the farm road track north to the tree line. Hounds drove the bunny up the tree line inside the tangles and put it to ground in the base of a hollow tree near the woods to end the hunting morning. Sunday August 21 Sousa had a nice litter of 6—3 boys and 3 girls—the day before Jim and Marsha's trip to Vermont. They are doing well and starting to play and explore every thing. The Wiedorns, Gene Bolt, and the Booths again did a fine job with the pack and kennels through the 28th. Happily no damage from the hurricane.

At **The Ludwig's Corner Horse Show**, September 3-5, the conservation groups, French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valleys Association and S.A.V.E., and Ryers's Farm for Aged Equines had a successful three days at our 40'x40' Open Space Tent. Despite the bands of rain on Monday, Kimberton Hunt, Warwick Village Hounds, Skycastle French Hounds and Ardrossan Beagles had a good parade of hounds at mid day, and the conservation groups got a lot of traffic. All in all it was a very successful show with over 600 horses in the classes, and the carriage classes on Sunday were rain free. We have given the tent for over 20 years to help get out the news about protecting open space, watersheds and farmland here in Chester County, and will continue to do so in the face of heavy development pressure. Let's all work to make sure that the last crop in the county is not an asphalt strip mall parking lot.

We had a nice training morning at Marsh Creek on Saturday the 10th. Going into the right hand cover strip hounds quickly got a bunny going that they drove all the way up the line inside and back toward the roadside entry gap in the hedgerow. It blew out the side and ran across the open patch under my car to cross the road into the development. We drew the long point cover strip out to the crossing at the end of the field, then the right side of that hedgerow strip, where Robin opened on a rabbit that got quickly to ground. The 11th at Jefferis's was sodden scenting with poor scent. Hounds worked hard to run 3 rabbits to ground in the tree stands and side strips. The 14th at Bob Berry's was blank to the south, but hounds had a good run in the big corn field, circling inside and driving it out to ground in the center hedgerow. At Kennels on the 17th, hounds covered the upper hedgerows, then found and drove it out to the creek. They ran it inside down to the carriage area and out along the pine stand to ground. The 18th at Marsh Creek hounds got up two rabbits going in. The



The Warwick Village Hounds, The Kimberton Hunt, The Skycastle French Hounds and The Ardrossan Beagles at Ludwig's Corner Horse Show September 5th.

first they ran out to the curve and back, then ran the second to the far end to ground. They put another to ground between the two fields on the way back. The weather—rains, high humidity and sodden fields even on partly dry (?) days—has made for a challenging summer. With rain threatening, we hunted at Kennels again on Wednesday the 21st. Hounds had a nice hunt from the upper hedgerows down the creek line to the road, turning the rabbit back for a run through the rhododendrums to the carriage house, to cross the drive uphill through the tree line where Salsa turned it back down the next field for a run down to the pine stand to ground. Saturday the 24th was relining runs with screenings and general cleanup after the unending rains. Dick Gross and Paul Wiedorn were supermen. Sunday we again hunted at Kennels. Quarry, Mischief, Robin, Uwchlan and the young entry had a grand time. They got on a rabbit in the first field beans, driving it in loops down toward the road and back to the top, where it blew out, ran up the upper drive and into the cover above the pool. They pushed it out again for a run back down the drive and right around the house into the yew banks. We then drew the stream cover beyond the carriage house and the upper field hedgerow blank and headed in. Back at the corner of the bean field, they jumped another rabbit which they drove for a loop and back up, where we gave it best as it zipped across into the fenced corner by the silo. A nice morning. At kennels, we finished relining run 1, then raked in StallDry into all the runs, and got out all hounds that weren't hunted. After feeding hounds we sanded and covered the door frame chewed areas with aluminum angle stripping and did further cleanup in preparation for the kennel inspection coming up next week. Ginny Beards, Gene Bolt and Paul Wiedorn did a great job. Saturday 1 October hounds scoured the hedgerows and woods at Marsh Creek, and except for a short run in the oval in briars, it was a blank; very wet and sudden cold may have kept the rabbits snug in their earths. Sunday at Jefferis's after the overnight rains was more of the same—a deer that they ignored and one short run to ground in the center woods strip. Young Vicar did well and all drew the rest of the grounds to no avail. A good working morning at Church Farm on Wednesday 5 October marked the end of summer training hunts. It has been an interesting summer, with the wildest heat and rain swings in memory. We pray that the hunting season's weather will be kinder!

We owe our sport to our wonderful landowners.

Daniel Betton Wessells

On July 11 our great friend and Field Master Dan Wessells died at his home in Glenmoore. He was 83. When Dan was diagnosed with leukemia and told chemotherapy would most likely not change the ultimate outcome, he elected to forgo treatment and hasten his demise.

A resident of Glenmoore PA and South Bristol ME, he was a graduate of The Lawrenceville School and Princeton University. During the Korean War, while serving as a Naval Lieutenant, Junior Grade, he was signal officer on the USS Sanborn and subsequently taught at the Amphibious Force Operational Intelligence School.

Dan had a distinguished career in civil and consulting engineering in commuter and high-speed railway projects. He was the design manager of The Philadelphia Airport High Speed Line Railroad and of track and systems for the Center City Commuter connection, a four track electrified tunnel connecting the former Reading and Pennsylvania Railroads' commuter networks. He participated in the initial planning for the Washington, D.C. regional transit system, the Northeast Corridor high-speed railway service and high-speed service between Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

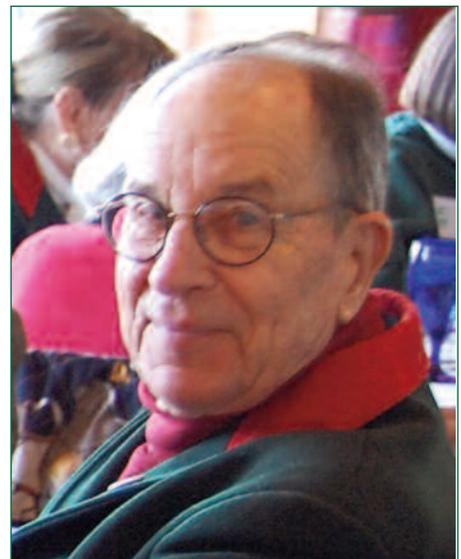
Previously, he had conducted field engineering for construction of Roosevelt Boulevard bridges crossing the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia and a nearby segment of Interstate 76. Before entering consulting engineering he had been the Conshohocken Plant Engineer of the Lee Rubber and Tire Company.

Following retirement he served on a local planning commission and on the Board of The Wallace Land Preservation Trust.

He is survived by his wife, Debby; two daughters, Reed Nichols of Chatham NJ, and Alexandra Sadlier of Mill Valley CA, and 4 grandchildren.

Dan followed foot packs all his life, first with the Treweryn Beagles and the Ardrossan, and for over twenty years with Skycastle as a whipper-in, hunt committee member and a field master. His support for our pack was truly awesome.

Dan will be greatly missed by all of us. Our heartfelt sympathies go out to Debbie Wessells and her family.





A Special Thanks to a Very Special Lady, Virginia Montgomery Baily.

Since Ginny moved to Oxford a few years ago, most of our newer members have not had the chance to get to know one of our founding members of the subscription pack we became in 1987 after Elizabeth Streeter's death. She fox hunted with the Pickering Hunt and began hunting with the Skycastle Bassets when the Streeters started the pack, before Elizabeth began importing the "fuzzies" and changed its name to "Skycastle French Hounds," as we are known today. Her Westover Farm on Fellowship Road in Chester Springs was one of our favorite meets for many years.

Ginny recently asked that someone take over the onerous task of maintaining and producing our Skycastle Membership List. Ginny has served as a member and Chairman of our Hunt Committee. She has maintained records of membership and handled printing and mailing of our addresses annually, and kept lists of people receiving colours of the hunt from the beginning to the present.

Thank you, Ginny, for your wonderful friendship and help over the years!

CONDUCT IN THE FIELD

We are all deeply indebted to farmers and landowners for permission to hunt on their properties, and for their cooperation in protecting game for our sport. We must be constantly alert to prevent damage to property and injury to livestock at all costs.

The following are a few common sense rules of behavior for people who hunt with our pack.

1. **FENCES.** Climb rail fences at the post where strongest, not in the middle. Slide under wire fences when possible. Don't stretch the wires. If a fence is broken, secure it if possible and immediately report it to staff.

2. **GATES.** If a gate is opened, make sure that the last person through closes it securely. If barways or rails are let down, make sure that they are put back up.

3. **GROUNDS.** Keep off lawns and gardens near houses, and winter wheat or other soft seeded ground, including golf greens, tees and traps.

4. **LIVESTOCK.** Keep well away from all livestock in fields and paddocks so as not to excite them. Move quietly around the enclosed area, rather than cross it, unless following the Field Master.

5. **SMOKING AND ALCOHOL.** No smoking or drinking permitted in the hunting field. One of our meets is at a school that asks that there be no alcohol on the property.

6. **PARKING AT THE MEET.** Don't park on driveway edges or where inconvenience will be caused to others. Be guided by the Field Master on arrival.

7. **HOUNDS.** Silence is golden when Hounds are drawing, or at a fault, or working a patchy line. And don't call to or urge on, alagging Hound. Hold up and notify the staff quietly.

8. **Finally, be guided by the Field Master.** Keep behind him unless Hounds are running. Keep at least 30 yards behind Hounds when running, and hold up for the Field Master as soon as they hesitate on the line. If no Field Master is present or appointed for the day, keep forty yards between yourself and the Huntsman and Hounds when hunting so as not to turn rabbits back into cover, and a good twenty yards when moving off or going home.



SKYCASTLE FRENCH HOUNDS 2010-2011 SEASON

AGE	ENTRY	SIRE	DAM
11	Magpie '01 Mischief '01	Luron (des Ajoncs de l'Aulne)	Ipine des Ajoncs de l'Aulne '00+
10	Sabine des Ajoncs de l'Aulne '02	Haxel de Fin Renard	Mireine des Ajoncs de l'Aulne '04+
6	Quarry '06	Luron de Mounaidieres '96	Mireine des Ajoncs de l'Aulne '04+
	Robin '06 Roguish '06	Oarsman '03	Pampa de la Bonne Franquette '04+
4	Salsa '08 Sousa '08	Gebeba's Larry	Mischief '01
3	Teasel '09 Trompette '09 Tuppence '09	Riddle '06	Sabine des Ajoncs de l'Aulne '07+
2	Uwchlan '10	Gebeba's Larry	Quarry '06
1	Vicar '11 Vesper '11	Gebeba's Dreamboat	Trompette '09

Cezar x Sousa litter of 6—3 doghounds and 3 bitches—born 8/21/11

Important Dates: Friday, October 7—Skycastle OKTOBERFEST Party

Sunday, October 9—OPENING MEET and Blessing of the
Hounds, Marsh Creek State Park

October 27-30—NATIONAL BASSET PACK TRIALS,
Aldie, Virginia