



BOLLETTINO

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This has been quite a winter. Photos of Lagotti and snow have circled social media on the internet. Living in the central Arizona semi desert, we miss a lot of the severe cold and snow. We had a blizzard on New Year's Eve that grounded all our plans to celebrate, followed by temperatures reaching the 70s. We had another week of rain and snow in early March. It can get down to below freezing temperatures as late as April, but my Lagotti may not get snow to play in for the rest of this season. Lagotti have dense coats and hairy feet which help them enjoy the winter season in most of our various climates.



Adrina - wearer of many hats!

We will be highlighting everything about truffles in this issue. We will celebrate those dogs who enjoy the art of doing what they are bred to do, locate the elusive and mysterious fungi. If you don't have anything that resembles a truffle (other than chocolate) in your area, hopefully you can find a NoseWork training class to have some nosey fun with your Lagotti. Sadly, in my area, we have neither, so I resorted to training my dog by myself.

Here are some photos of how I trained Adrina to hunt in four 10 minute sessions. She already had a reliable retrieve and seemed to be using her nose when we threw toys or sticks into the brush outdoors. I filled the toe of an old sock with rice that had truffle oil sprinkled on it. I put that in a net bag to make my "truffle". A small pill bottle with holes in it could work. Our first lessons were in the house. Lesson one was to "find" the partially hidden object. Lesson two was to find the object that was hidden out of sight. Lesson three was outdoors with the object placed somewhere on the ground in a slight depression. Lesson four was finding it buried under a bit of soil. We progressed to hiding it deeper and farther away. It is a fun game and the dogs love to play it.



Judith Martin, Editor

Would you like to submit an article for the summer issue? Please email submissions for the following topics: News and Events, Health, Breeding, Tips on Training, Nutrition, or Fun Photos. Please include any representative photos with your submission, along with your dog's name, age, and a photo caption. Email your submissions to:

Bollettino@LagottoUS.com

Deadline for next issue:
May 15, 2015

Truffles, truffles, truffles!

by Alana McGee



Oregon Black and Oregon White truffles



Oregon White truffle habitat



T. Oregonese - White truffles

Often called diamonds of the culinary world, truffles are edible fungi that grow underground, and are considered to be a delicacy because of their intense and unique characteristics and aromas. Truffles are often shaved on top of food prior to serving, but they also are used to infuse flavors into dishes. Along with caviar, saffron, and matsutake mushrooms, truffles are considered one of the most highly sought after, rare, and expensive foods in the world.

What is a truffle? Truffles are the fruiting bodies (spore-bearing mechanisms) of underground mushrooms. The actual fungus from which the truffles grow are formed by an underground network of mycelium in a symbiotic relationship with a host plant. This mutually beneficial arrangement occurs when the fungal mycelium and the root cells of the plant grow together to create mycorrhizae. The plant provides sugars to the fungus through photosynthesis, and the fungus provides the plant with minerals, water, and other nutrients from the soil that it could not get by itself.

Why do truffles smell? Unlike mushrooms above ground, truffles rely entirely on animals to eat them as a means of spore dispersal. That is how truffle fungi spread and reproduce. And how do they do that exactly? Well, by smelling good of course! As truffles mature they develop odors and send off gasses and pheromones that signal to the surrounding wildlife that there is something tasty hidden under the soil. We like to eat them for the same reasons a chipmunk might.

Are there many types of truffles? Yes. There are many species of truffles, however, only a handful are of commercial culinary value and taste very good.

Where do truffles grow? Truffles are found all over the world and are usually associated with certain families of trees such as Pine, Oak, Hazelnut and Willow; although almost any tree can form mycorrhizae with truffle forming fungi of some kind. Depending on the species of truffle and environmental conditions they can be found erupting through the soil or up to 12 inches (or more!) underground. In the Pacific Northwest region of North America, three of the commercial culinary varieties of truffles grow in association with Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) in coastal forests and timber stands. The main growing season for commercial culinary species in the Pacific Northwest is winter through late spring. Different species of truffles, such as some of those in Europe will be ripe at different times of the year.

How do you harvest truffles?

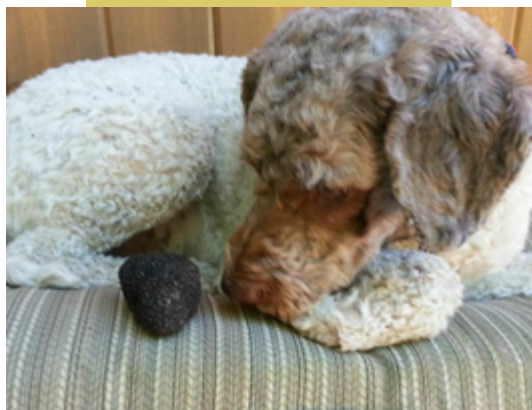
As truffles are usually found underground, you have to have a way to gather them! This is where detection animals come into play because of their superior olfactory capabilities. Traditionally in Europe truffles were harvested by female pigs because the volatile compounds ripe truffles release are similar to pheromones emitted from a male pig. These days however dogs are used because while they have to be trained, they do not eat the truffles as readily and are much easier to manage. A 400 lb pig is slightly more cumbersome than a 40 lb dog! Sadly, in the United States, truffles are also harvested using rakes which can be detrimental to the environment and the domestic truffle economy.

What's the deal with pigs? Pigs naturally forage and root (dig for food) in the ground with their snouts and are keen lovers of truffles themselves and will happily gobble them up if not trained to eat something else as a reward.

Continued next page



Lolo at a producing Perigord Truffiere in Oregon



Lolo and the Burgundy truffle=u



Lolo at Sinskey Truffiere

Pigs were traditionally used in Europe to hunt for truffles because they can detect truffles at great depths, and required little to no training. In some locations using sows is still the preferred method, however the popularity and ease of use of hunting with dogs has taken precedence over the last century.

What is raking? Raking for truffles is the act of raking the soil of a forest to expose truffles, and then collecting them. This method, used regularly for scientific collections, often yields unripe and immature specimens which may not be suitable for culinary use. Destructive or aggressive raking damages the ecosystem from which the truffles are removed and also negatively impacts the truffle economy, devaluing the quality and reputation of the truffles. Raking can damage other unripe truffles that are not harvested by dislodging them from the support network with their host trees and thus ending their maturation process.

Why use dogs? Why not, we say! Properly utilizing dogs (or pigs) for locating truffles is more gentle on the environment (and we think more fun!). Unripe truffles lack odor, and therefore don't have much culinary value. Using dogs allows us to find only the ripe truffles with their amazing aromatics, thus preserving and ensuring optimum culinary value. Dogs also pinpoint the location of ripe truffles and thus less of the environment and fragile duff layer of the soil is disturbed when collecting. For many of us dogs are also part of our daily lives, and live with us as pets. Dogs have amazing olfactory capabilities that far exceed our own, and most dogs thoroughly enjoy scent games. Truffle hunting with dogs is a natural and fun way to enjoy working and playing with your canine family member.

Can any dog find truffles? We like to say that almost any dog, and any breed, with the right training, can be trained to find truffles. It is more about individual personality and how you work together as a team. You don't have to have a Lagotto Romagnolo (the traditional Italian truffle hunting breed) in order to be able to train your dog for truffle hunting. No breed, or mixture thereof, is off limits. We have trained or worked with Chihuahuas, Corgis, German Shepherds, Labs, Spaniels, Cattle Dogs, Newfoundlands, American Staffordshire Terriers, Great Danes, French Bulldogs, and the list goes on. Most dogs thoroughly enjoy hunting for truffles because we make it a game!

Can dogs who find truffles also be trained to find other mushrooms?


You bet! You can train a dog to find just about anything. The process is fairly similar when teaching your canine to hunt for other mushrooms. We have trained dogs to find matsutake, morels, chanterelles, and other species.

Can I grow truffles? Growing truffles reliably is still considered experimental farming to a degree, but there have been many new advances in scientific methods and theory in the past decade. Depending on where you live or want to grow truffles and on what scale, there are scientists and consultants available to aid you in your endeavors. Truffles grow in association with trees, and in order to grow truffles you need inoculated seedlings. It is a complex science, but there are some folks who are trying, some with success!

Why are truffles so expensive? Different species of truffles will fetch a range of prices at market and price fluctuates depending on a variety of factors. The most expensive species, the "Alba white truffle" (*Tuber magnatum*) can reach upwards of \$2,500/ lb. Truffles are rare, and are notoriously difficult to detect even with the aid of detector animals. This adds not only to the allure, but increases the value. This is one of the reasons truffles are so valuable; they are considered a wild food.



The Truth about Truffle Oil

Not all truffle oil is created equal however. Almost all truffle oil is actually synthetic in nature (the truffle part- not the oil), as are the additives found in truffle salts. When purchasing a truffle oil or truffle salt the few key things to look for on the label are Latin species name, and the words flavoring or aroma. If the package doesn't list a species name, we would recommend you skip it altogether. If it says "aroma" or "flavoring" or anything similar, what that means is a chemical was added to make it tasty truffle! These can still be great, but that little tiny piece of truffle you see in the bottle is for show. Generally most truffle salts will be made with Summer truffles (*Tuber aestivum/uncinatum*) and are generally less potent because that is a milder species. Jarred truffles have their uses, but don't be fooled. The same rules that apply for oils and salts. Check the label for the latin name! Jarred truffles will never be as strong as real truffles. They are usually comprised of less economically viable species (such as summer truffle or chinese truffles) that have been bathed in the juice of the more prestigious Perigord truffle. 

Alana McGee is on the editorial team of the Bollettino and is the owner of Truffle Dog Company in Seattle.

Truffle Season

Marcie Wolf

Groggy, I try to ignore the soft gray light filtering into the bedroom, but something warm and wet meets with the tip of my nose. I open my eyes to my dog Luna towering over my face, her ears flopping downward, her nose hovering just over mine. She wags triumphantly and gives me yet another tiny kiss. It is Saturday morning in Oregon's wet Willamette Valley, and it is truffle season. My husband is still burrowed into his side of the bed, earbuds in, snoring along to NPR. Luna prances toward the door, eager for food... and truffle hunting. I make our breakfasts, and as soon as hers is gone she looks at me questioningly. I go to the closet and place my boots, truffling bag, and her leash near the front door. Satisfied, she settles down while I eat and dress. Finally I am ready, dressed in baggy rain pants and jacket, and my Oregon Rain Hat—Oregon fashion at its frumpiest and most practical. Luna on the other hand looks quite fetching in her Cloudchaser jacket. But fashion aside, it is one of the most sensible purchases I've made as it keeps so much of her coat free from seeds, burrs, and mud, and cuts down on bathing and grooming time. Finally we jump in the car and head out of town. Twenty minutes later we park at the trail head and start walking up an old road, impervious to the cool, damp air and pending drizzle. We are free! We enter a stand of Douglas Fir and Luna raises her nose to the breeze, tugging on the leash. She'd prefer to be free and fly through the forest, but her eagerness means she will not return quickly when I call. The forest is home to cougar, bobcat, coyotes, porcupines, skunks, and the occasional bear. An encounter could be unpleasant, costly, or even deadly. Luna sniffs the earth, plunging her nose into the duff, and tail wagging she begins to dig. I gently pull her back to look, but there is no sign of a truffle, I take my digging tool, an old spoon, and gather up some of the soil, bringing it to my nose. It smells like truffle, pungent and delicious. Frustrated Luna whimpers till I release her, and snorting, buries her entire muzzle into the earth. Furiously she digs, moving sticks and ripping roots with her teeth. Finally I look again, and there it is, an Oregon White truffle. Gently I place the spoon into the surrounding soil and release it. Sometimes we find a lot of truffles, sometimes we find none. But we always get dirty, and we always have fun.



Searching for truffles East of the Mississippi

Hilarie Gibbs-Sykes



"I found these
all by myself!"

Much has been said and written about truffle hunting in the northwest, but did you know that there are many indigenous truffle species all over the country? The Field Guide to North American Truffles: Hunting, Identifying, and Enjoying the World's Most Prized Fungi by Matt Trappe, Frank Evans and James Trappe is an excellent source for anyone interested in searching for truffles in the wild. In this illustrated guide, the authors provide photos of each truffle species, the name of the host tree(s), along with other information including aroma, edibility, and palatability of the truffle. The Pecan Truffle A native truffle receiving increasing attention from truffle researchers, chefs and gastronomes is the tuber lyonii. Although often referred to as the pecan truffle, the pecan tree is not the only host species. Pecan truffles can also be found in forests with heavy stands of hickory and oak in forests east of the Rockies from northern Mexico to Canada. Some sources also mention pines as a host tree for this truffle while others disagree. The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences More information on pecan truffles can be found at: <http://plantpath.ifas.ufl.edu/faculty/smith/Smith-et-al-2012-Pecan-Truffle-BW.pdf><http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fruits/pecantruffles/>

In the fall of 1999 when I was climbing up and down the mountains and crawling through thickets and over downed trees on my first truffle hunt in Italy, I really had no idea where my involvement with the Lagotto Romagnolo would take me in the coming years. Since that day, I have had the opportunity to hunt truffles 3 more times in Italy. It can be an almost mystic experience, walking – or climbing – through forest with friends and dogs in search of the elusive white truffle. It takes time and there are always moments to simply enjoy being outside. But there is another style of truffle hunting that is slowly coming to be in the US and other countries. This is the hunting of truffles in planted and tended groves of host trees that have been inoculated with truffles spores as tiny saplings. Truffles are the ultimate slow food as a grove can take 5 to 7 years – or more – to come into production. Nor is success guaranteed as there are still many unknown factors that can affect fruiting. The allure is the incredible value of the harvest when (and if!) the grove starts producing.

Dr Tom Michaels of Tennessee Truffles was the first grower to succeed in producing perigord truffles commercially in the US. Tennessee Truffles is located in northeastern Tennessee, about 2 hours from our home. We first met Dr Michaels in 2007 when he contacted us to see if we had a dog trained to search for truffles. At the time we did not and were unable to help him. However, we began working with him in 2010 with Cino della Metaurense and Eppy (Morara). Cino found the first truffle, but it was a bitterly cold day as the harvest season is from mid-December to mid-February. When it began to sleet we called it a day with perhaps four truffles for all of our efforts. In 2011, Dr Michaels chose Eppy as his primary truffle dog. There were some of those crisp sunny days that I remembered so well from my Italian experiences, other than that it was a vastly different experience. Eppy was finding truffles everywhere – and we had to keep up

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My Bucket List

Staci O'toole

Who would have thought that an item on your bucket list could make a dream come true? I had dreamed of getting my Lagotto and becoming a truffle hunter. I wasn't exactly sure what it would entail or if it could be a reality. From everything I read, the experts were in Italy, and a successful truffle dog was verified by truffle competitions. Luckily, I found Jacki, from Terra Incognito, who knew what we needed to do and after an intense interview assured me it could be accomplished. To ensure success she made sure my pup had the right characteristics and temperament, was imprinted with truffle scent, and most importantly that I was committed. After being on a waiting list for nearly a year, my little hellion, Mila Fiore arrived to great expectations. We started the process fetching truffle scented socks, attending the Oregon Truffle Festival dog training and a nose work clinic at Sandy Mignogna's farm in PA. We continued the training with Alana McGee and the Truffle Dog Company. It was an intense process and more work than I imagined. With the closest known truffle fields over 600 miles away, the dream had begun to fade.



Truffle Hunting in Italy had been on my bucket list way before I had entertained the idea of becoming a truffle hunter and I couldn't contain my excitement when Jacki invited me to attend the Raduno Internazionale du Club Italiano Lagotto; 2 days of shows "aesthetic" and a one day truffle trial competition in nearby hills of Brisighella. The romance of the hunt and reward of an amazing celebration of an Italian truffle feast at the awards dinner had me booking my flight and making arrangements to fly off 3 weeks later! I had considered for a brief moment to bring my little truffle huntress and realized that was foolish, as the only preparation I had time for was to try to learn a little Italian before heading to the country.

It was beautiful warm fall morning when we reached Villa Morsiani in the middle of the countryside in Bagnara, between Bologna and Ravenna. The gates of the walled compound were hung with banners announcing the event. Inside the walls were a registration table and two show rings cordoned off with Royal Canine's Sponsor ribbons with dogs and handler

I had never seen so many Lagotti in one place, all ages, colors and sizes. I was introduced to Jacki's business partner Sondra who was travelling with Ute of Comes Cordis Kennel of Germany who had two of her dogs- Adelle and Othello that were in the competition. While speaking with an executive of the club, I was crushed to find out that the actual truffle trials were not open to the public; it would be too distracting to the dogs and handlers. Sondra saw the disappointment in my face as I pleaded "isn't there anyway at all that I could at least see the hallowed grounds". "No not unless

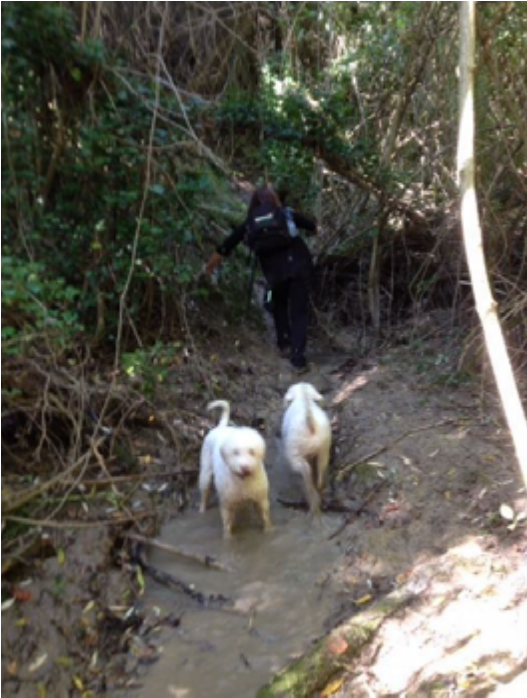


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Above: Raduno awards

Below: Walking to trials, easy for the dogs, hard for me.



you have a dog in the competition.” Luckily she told me that Ute might be willing to let me help out and hold one of the dogs while the other was working. It was a lot to ask of Ute, a complete stranger helping her with her prized dogs in one of the most important competitions of the year, but she graciously agreed.

We woke up the next morning preparing to leave the Agriturismo at 5:30 am while it was still dark and very foggy. Ute and I met in the dark parking lot wearing our head lamps and she checked out my clothing and boots to see if I was properly prepared. We were both focused and serious for the journey ahead. As the sun began to rise and we were on track to the destination, the fog began to lift as did my mood. It was going to be a beautiful sunny day on the mountain and I realized in that moment that I was actually going to the truffle trials. As we arrived at our destination, my ear to ear grin must have been contagious as the solemn weathered old truffle hunters who were mostly men, (whom on the previous day barely noticed my existence) actually nodded and acknowledged my presence with a glimmer of a smile.

The classes were broken down by the dog's age and experience with the younger dogs working in the flat areas with some underbrush, yet reasonably easy to manage. We sat in the field in the warm morning sun waiting for about an hour until it was our turn. While we watched and waited Ute, explained to me the different personalities of Adelle and Othello and how I would need to manage them when she was working. Adelle and Ute's name were finally called. As we walked to the forest edge, I offered to carry her heavy backpack as I was certain to make myself useful, but the judge frowned when he saw me in tow. Ute explained my presence and he nodded reluctantly for me to follow, and in Italian, told me to keep my distance. 15 minutes flew by. Ute was very happy with Adelle's performance and explained they had found one planted truffle and one wild truffle which would give them an added bonus points.

Othello's truffle trial area was a 15 min hike into the dark steep woods. I had already started to lag behind when Adelle spotted water and with a quick jerk headed towards it. I was already challenged on the steep slope with the heavy back pack, and I lost my balance. I tumbled down the steep embankment towards the river. I ended up landing on my butt and sliding the 9 to 10 feet to the water's edge. I managed to right myself and continue to follow Ute. I jumped a small stream, landed in the water and walked out my hiking shoe as it stuck in the mud. Part of our conversation was “Everything okay?” and “no worry!”. We made the start time with minutes to spare and watched as Othello and Ute started to work.. Ute was very pleased with Othello's finds. I couldn't have asked for a more perfect day or a better way to check Truffle hunting off my bucket list. It was so inspiring and exhilarating that it made me refocus on what it would feel like to accomplish my dream of becoming a truffle hunter and although it there was lots of hard work to come it would be worth it to have this same feeling myself one day when I would be working as a team with my Mila.

Imagine my surprise when we returned to the states to find we had been invited to compete in the first ever North American Truffle competition the Joriad at the Oregon Truffle Festival to be held that following January. Re-inspired we signed up and began training for the next best day in my life fulfilling my dream of team Truffle Huntress 🐕

The New Idaho Tuber *Paul Beckman*

FIRST WHITE TRUFFLE PRODUCED IN IDAHO
February 12, 2012,



Idaho Bianchetti Truffles



Sophia and Paul's first truffle



Bella Gitana with her first find

The first North American cultivated Bianchetto truffle (aka tuber borchii, Italian spring white truffle or Tuscany white truffle) was harvested in a truffle orchard near Boise, Idaho. Paul Beckman and Brad Sprenger were hunting for truffles with Sophia (a Lagotto Romagnolo or Italian Truffle Dog) on Beckman's farm. While Mr. Beckman is testing five different truffle varieties in his orchard, they were specifically focused on hunting the Bianchetto truffle because this variety matures in the spring.

Sophie, a Lagotto Romagnolo, identified the Bianchetto truffle at a depth of about 8". She had previously found about 80 Oregon white winter truffles in a little over an hour at the Oregon Truffle Festival. Beckman, Sprenger and several other Boise area farmers have planted about a hundred acres with thousands of trees inoculated by Dr. Charles Lefevre at New World Truffieres in Eugene, Oregon.

Eugene is also home to the Oregon Truffle Festival where most of the Idaho growers have gathered to learn the art of truffle growing. Every year truffle experts from around the world are brought in for these grower seminars. Amazingly most of these experts have ties to the mycology department at Oregon State University. Dr Lefevre has promoted the use of dogs from the very beginning to decrease the destruction to the forest floor in Oregon from raking for truffles. The Lagottos have rapidly become the dog of choice for truffle growers. Charles has two Lagottos.

Most inoculated trees are European hazelnut, but several oak tree varieties have also been planted. The Idaho group hopes to bring Idaho to the international stage as a key producer of this gourmet delicacy and bring a healthy competition to their eastern counterparts such as Dr Tom Michaels of Tennessee Truffles, the first commercial grower in the US. He has been producing the French Perigord black truffles (tuber melanosporum) since 2007. We also have a healthy dog competition as one might suspect.

Brad Sprenger's Sophia is the queen of the pack at this moment. Beckman's Bella Gitana is rapidly progressing with her training and has found about twenty truffles. Brad's new dog, Dante is still being a puppy. All of our Lagottos came from Hilarie and Mel Sykes of Tennessee who have been instrumental in bringing this breed to America. They brought Tom over to hunt Dr Michaels grove and later provided Brenda to him to continue his harvests. 🐾

Truffle hunting, Umbria Italy

Sandy Mignona

I think everyone has a bucket list and hopes to one day check off each adventure on their list. In December I was able to check off one at the top of my list when I was finally able to take up a friend's offer to go on a truffle hunt – in Italy! My friend, Nicola, is a hobby truffle hunter who lives in Umbria, Italy and has a well-seasoned, truffle hunting Lagotto named Mena and also two young dogs which are still fine tuning their skills.

Now, everything you hear about truffle hunters not wanting to share their hunting spots is true. When I showed up with a friend of mine from Emilia Romagna to join us on our truffle hunt, Nicola teased us that he would have to blindfold my friend so he wouldn't see where he was taking us. After about a 45 minute drive through the most beautiful valleys and hills of Umbria, we pulled onto a dirt road and continued to travel about another mile, then pulled off into the weeds and we were ready to start. He explained to me that we were on the outside of the white truffle season and that we would have a lucky day if we were able to find any white truffles.

To be honest, if we found any truffles that day it would be an added bonus for me because my true desire was to hike through the woods with the dogs and watch them work. I often wondered when I saw the truffle hunters dressed in some serious hiking gear how difficult the terrain really was, but I can now say we had five hours of serious hiking. At times we were clambering nearly straight up inclines holding onto tree roots to pull ourselves up, walking along muddy cliffs where the footing was extremely slick and getting caught in thickets of brambles, all the while I couldn't have been any happier.

With great enthusiasm we headed into the woods and it was only about 10 minutes into our hike when Mena started to dig frantically. Nicola quickly went to where she was digging and used a tool to pick up some soil; he smelled the soil, turned to us and announced she found a truffle. He called us over to smell the soil and wow, the soil and air around us was permeated with the smell of truffle. We pulled Mena aside, fed her treats and praised her over and over for a job well done and it seemed as though she was truly happy to show us her find. It was so interesting to watch the dogs work, they really seemed like they were out just enjoying the walk but Nicola explained to me that they were working – scampering up and down the hillsides and running along the ravine where there was a small stream. If you watched them closely, they would be at a steady pace with their noses towards the ground and all of a sudden, they would stop in their tracks and go back a couple of feet and start digging. Sometimes digging for a few seconds to check a little closer and then they would move on and other times their digging became more intent.

At one point the dogs started to intently dig and to Nicola's amazement, he explained to us that he had found a very large white truffle in that exact spot two weeks ago. We smelled the soil and any trace of truffle was not evident to us but obviously the dogs could pick up the scent of truffle. He checked the soil thoroughly and there



was nothing to be found. And this is why the Lagotti makes such an awesome truffle hunting dog because they truly have an amazingly developed sense of smell! So eventually our adventure had to come to an end and by the time we emerged out of the woods the dogs had uncovered one large black truffle, a couple of small ones, three white truffles worth keeping and one the size of a large pea that Nicola threw back in the hole. The dogs were muddy and wet but all three seemed just as energetic coming out of the woods as going in five hours before. Nicola was kind enough to insist that we take all of the truffles we found that day back to our friend's house to enjoy with our dinner.

So, needless to say, we experienced the most awesome home-made ravioli with fresh olive oil and shaved white truffles – a meal that would impress even the most seasoned foodies! Not only did I cross something off of my list of adventures to experience but now I have found a new passion and I would go again as many times as Nicola would have me. 🐾



Wild Truffle & Mushroom Risotto

(submitted by Marcie Wolf)

10 Tablespoons butter
1 1/2 lbs. fresh wild mushrooms slice or whole (We use Chanterelles, Hedgehogs, or Morels)
6 cups chicken broth
1 Tablespoon olive oil
3/4 cup chopped leek (only the light colored parts)
1 1/4 cups Arborio rice
1/4 cup dry white wine
1/4 cup Marsala wine
1/4 cup grated Parmesan (or more!) Plus, some for at the table.
1-2 fresh, clean Wild Oregon Truffles (We used white, use more if you like!)

1. Melt 2 Tablespoons butter in skillet and c 1/4 of the mushrooms till tender. Set aside in bowl. Repeat in small batches, then sauté the leeks with remaining butter plus the olive oil, and add to the bowl of mushrooms. 2. Pour the chicken broth into a large kettle. Simmer over medium heat, and hold at temperature. Move to step 3 while this is heating up. 3. Sauté the rice in the skillet over medium heat till the edges begin to look translucent. Approximately 3-4 minutes. 4. Add the Marsala and white wine to the rice, stir till absorbed. 5. Add 3/4 cup chicken broth and stir till absorbed. 6. Continue to add broth 3/4 cup at a time, waiting till nearly absorbed before adding more.



Hunting with dogs is the best

Mike Madrid

I am in an article that was in the Oregon Mycological Society newsletter this month. Copied with permission

Sunday, March 1, 2015 . Stimson Forest Products land near Timber, Oregon

Several interesting things happened relating to the March 1st truffle field trip/winter picnic.

- First of all, with the help of Candace Bonner, we obtained permission to hold the field trip on Stimson Forest Products land near Timber, Oregon. Once Stimson realized who we are and our mission, they not only gave us permission to collect mushrooms, they asked us to lead a field trip this fall to educate their foresters on mushroom ID and the role fungi play in forest ecology. .
- Second, I made it abundantly clear that this was a winter picnic with scant hope of finding a single truffle using a rake.
- Third, I invited Mike Madrid and his Italian Lagotto truffle dog (Shiva-ree Massimo) to prove that truffles were present in the closed canopy Doug fir forest (approx. 30 year-old trees). Massimo and his sister found a couple of dozen Tuber gibbosum (Oregon white truffle). Mike related how he trained his dog and where to get truffle oil for training.

The last I heard, the rest of the OMS crew didn't find any Oregon white truffles but we had a good picnic in the woods. Leah Bendlin identified the few mushrooms that people brought in at the end of the day.

Paul Whitney, Field Trip Leader
Photos by Candace Parmer

Mike adds: They included these nice pictures of Massimo. He has turned out to be a very good truffer and hard worker. He is really a beautiful young dog. Just to clarify these were only a small amount of the truffles that Massimo found on that day. We were simply showing the difference of the Oregon Winter Whites to the odd white and gray truffle that we could not identify. Also this was kind of a funny like thing that happened. When the group broke for lunch I emptied all the truffles from the left pocket of my forging vest and put them on the tail gate of my truck to show the group what a dog can really do. No one in the group found any truffle by raking, the only truffles found were found by Massimo. Any way, after lunch I put the truffles back in what I thought was my left vest pocket because my vest was also on the tail gate, but I really put them in my right vest pocket, this is where I keep his treats that he receives when he finds a ripe truffle. Well it wasn't until after he found 3 more truffles that I realized that I had been giving him truffles for his reward instead of his dog treats. Of course he didn't mind because he loves truffles as much as I do. A pretty expensive dog treat. 🐾



Sniffing the air



Right here it is!



Massimo earned his kibble that day

Truffle Festivals

Alana McGee

Many have heard of the famous Alba Truffle festival held in September of every year in the hills and market towns of northern Italy. What you may not know is there are actually 3 truffle festivals or gatherings in the United States! This year marked the 5th annual Napa Truffle Festival, the 10th annual Oregon Truffle Festival, and introducing the 1st (although there have been others in this area in the past) Asheville Truffle Experience!

These festivals take place during the peak of truffle production in the United States which is in January & February. All three festivals highlight the exquisite & ethereal nature of truffles by bringing in world renowned chefs to oooh and ahhh guests with their culinary creations. All three truffle festivals also have a scientific component and bring in scientists and truffle consultants from all over the globe as well as regional experts.

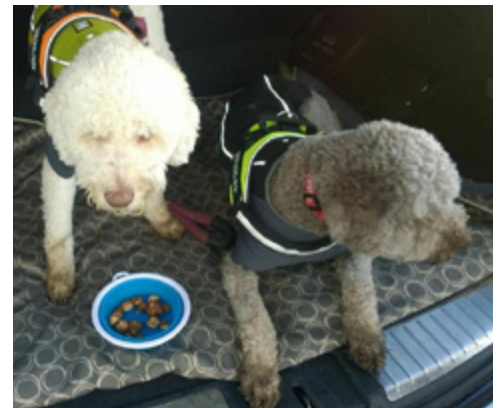
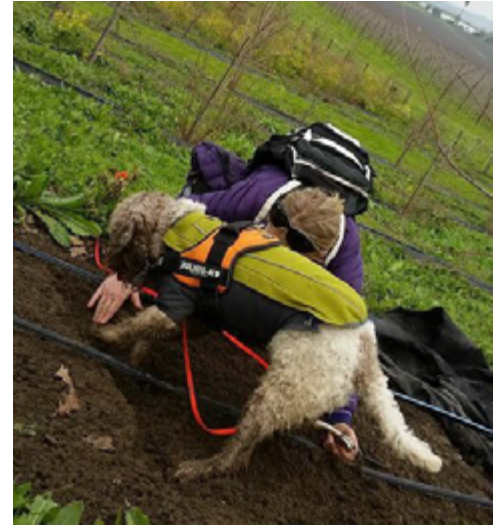
In chronological order the Napa Truffle Festival is first. This year it was held Jan 16th – Jan 19th in as the name suggest, in Napa, California. In addition to long time host chef and amazing culinary talent (and the only US chef to ever be invited to the Alba truffle festival) Chef Ken Frank of La Toque welcomed Michelin star chefs: Chef Riccardo Agostini from Ristoranti il Piastrino in Pennabilli Rimini, Italy, Chef Roberto Donna of Al Dente Ristorante in Washington, DC and Chef Tony Esnault of Church & State in Los Angeles.

The weekend started off with scientific forums on aspects related to truffle cultivation with Dr. Paul Thomas of Mycorrhizal System in the UK, and myself covering topics on the science of canine olfaction and practical application transitioning dogs to working on orchards for commercial harvests of cultivated species. The following day was more culinary centric with well, what does one do in Napa during a truffle festival, visit wineries of course!

There were opulent Truffle lunches at participating wineries, followed by a truffle hunting demonstration at Sinskey Vineyards on their Perigord & Burgundy Truffle orchard. There were 3 Lagotti in attendance providing the demonstration as part of the festival. Myself & Lolo, Staci O'toole with Mila, and Bill Collins & Rico. Of course everyone loves following the dogs, and it was a great time. You can't quite beat hunting truffles with a glass of wine in hand. The night ended with the centerpiece of the festival, the Dinner at La Toque.

The Sunday of the festival kicked off with a wild mushroom forage in the hills above Napa where some great edible species, such as Matsutake, were found. Lolo even found one wild native truffle, a small fruity species later identified as *Balsamia magnata*. The following day there was a truffle marketplace at the Oxbow in Napa with different vendors creating such wonderful dishes as truffle pizza and even truffle cocktails!

The Oregon Truffle this year celebrated its 10th anniversary, and celebrated this by expanding the festival into the Portland area and adding a Truffle hunting competition for amateur hunters to get out in the woods, compete, and show their stuff! The event spanned several weeks. Saturday & Sunday Continued with "Foraging & Feasting" where guests were lead on a truffle hunt in the woods followed by lunch at one of three of the Willamette valley's celebrated wineries or another great experience "Better Together" which paired Oregon truffles with Oregon's famous Pinot Noir. Sun-



Continued next page

day also included the truffle marketplace in Newberg where the public could come and sample various truffle related products, and take home some truffles themselves as well as wine taste their way around the state all in one setting. The follow week was the inaugural Joriad Truffle hunting competition which pitted amateur handlers against the clock to find truffles in a staged arena and then finalists were taken to a secret location deep in the Willamette valley and put to test of finding real truffles! The Lagotto community had a strong representation, and took home 2nd, 3rd, & 4th places! It was a fabulous event that was followed by an award dinner, and all had a great time and made new friends!

The following weekend took place in Eugene, Oregon. The festival has grown quite big over the years and this year did not disappoint. This included the scientific growers' forum where prospective orchard owners, and those waiting for their first crop of European truffles to mature, listened to scientists, orchardists, and orchard owners from all over the world including as far away as Italy and Australia. Including scientists such as Dr. Shannon Berch from B.C. Canada, Dr. Matt Smith of Florida, one of the leading authorities on Pecan Truffles, and Nigel Wood the founder of the Melbourne Truffle Festival in Melbourne Australia. The weekend also included cooking classes, and the always sold out Truffle Dog Training Seminar lead by Jim Sanford of Blackberry Farms and Deb Walker of k-9 Behavior Company. Teams who participated in the training seminar learned how to identify odor and then on the second day got to go out into the field and try their hand at the real thing! Happy to say most dogs found a truffle the 2nd day out in the woods!

The weekend also included gourmet dinners at private villas in Oregon wine country as well as a host of other culinary events, and even more truffle hunts in the woods with many volunteers pitching in to make the event a great success, such as Mike Madrid who lead one of the foraging trips into the woods with his Lagotto, Massimo.

The culmination of the weekend's events was the Grand Truffle Dinner. This dinner highlighted native Oregon winter white & black truffles in the hands of 6 award winning chefs. Each of these courses was of course, also paired with amazing Oregon Wine. On Sunday the public was also welcomed to the Truffle marketplace, where once again everyone could see, taste, and smell all the best that the truffle world has to offer in the United States.

At this writing, the Asheville Truffle Experience is yet to come, held Feb 20th-22nd in Asheville North Carolina.

This 3-day truffle extravaganza includes scientific talks by truffle experts Pierre Sourzat from France and Dr. Jim Trappe from Oregon as well culinary demonstrations and a star studded wine-paired truffle dinner with Chef William Dissenhighlighting the black winter truffle aka the Perigord truffle which is grown locally in North Carolina! All of this is then followed up by a visit to the Mountain Research Station Truffle Orchard and a truffle dog demonstration with Lois Martin of Truffle Dog Company and her Lagotto Monza. On Saturday there also will be a market place open to the public in The Cellar at Isa's Bistro in downtown Asheville filled with truffle goodness and you will be able to take home your very own black diamonds of the kitchen!



Hunting with Lidia

Dawn Meiklejohn

Lidia wears different “outfits” for different jobs. She needs to know that today I truffle hunt or today I am a therapy dog. Lidia’s coat helps keep the forest vegetation out of her curls, it keeps her warm, and dry. The harness helps me if I fall over logs or trip, it also helps me up steep hills. It is useful if I need to grab Lidia quickly, as does the long line, if we see other animals. Both bears and horses have crossed our paths this week. The bears should be hibernating, but it has been too warm this winter. I wear a pack when we truffle hunt. With all my scouting experience, I want to be prepared for whatever we need. In the pack I carry food and water for both of us, a knife, a whistle, cell phone, compass, a canine and human first aid kit, a nylon ground cloth, a solar blanket, flashlight, matches/lighter, super absorbent towel, hat, gloves, extra socks for me and an extra jacket for Lidia. We are prepared to stay out for a couple of days in case of emergency. I also have containers for the truffles Lidia finds.

Fats bring out the aromatic flavors of the truffles so we make truffle butter for popcorn, truffle cream cheese, truffle risotto, truffle omelet, truffle mac and cheese, truffle pizza, truffle cheeseburgers, truffle sauce for steaks, and we add microplaned truffle last minute to cream soups.

Truffle Creme Recipe:

Need: glass jar, tea ball, heavy cream, whipped cream maker Truffle in tea ball, suspended in jar 1/2 full of cream, lid on jar, put in refrigerator for a day to infuse the cream with the aroma and flavor of truffle Whip the cream and enjoy on hot chocolate, or pumpkin pie. Use your imagination!



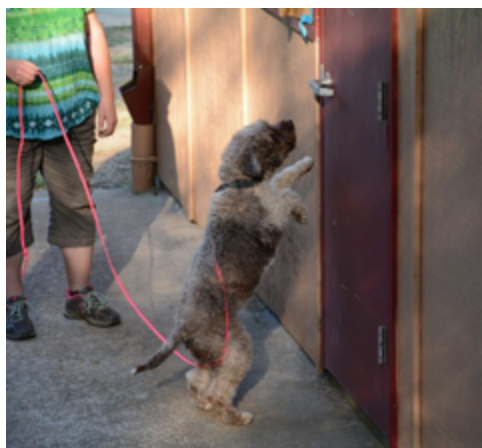
Meta” Sweet and Intuitive (2/20/04 - 1/6/15)

How loved you were. Thank you for the light you brought to each day, the privilege of your unwavering love and constant companionship. The hospital where you worked planted a tree in your memory and wrote, “she had a profound impact on our patients.” You left the world a better place. The memory of you will be a forever blessing to us.

**Meta della Metaurense Thd, CGC, CGCA
Registered with Therapy Dogs, Inc.**

The Nose Knows

LRCA members



From: **Jeannine May, KPA-CTP Pacific Truffle Dogs**

1. Relationship! The more activities, whether trick training, rally, rally free, truffle hunting or anything else, the closer your relationship grows. All these activities, when trained with positive methods, increase communication and understanding. You learn more about your dog and your dog learn more about you and you both have fun!

2. Best truffle day: almost 4 lbs of Oregon White Truffles in about 4 1/2 hours hunting two dogs at once; Isis and JC (corgi X) both my dogs started truffle training at 3 mos., by 4 mos she was doing discrimination training exercises and finding hidden training hides. She gets better and better with each passing truffle season. After a year+ of truffle hunting and training I decided to train for Nosework in the off season. She passed her ORT for all three odors in one trial. She passed her NW1 in her first trial, and her NWII on her third try--and she took first place overall :) We've not been entered in a NWIII yet but hope to eventually. In the meantime I'm preparing to enter UKC Nosework trials. She has a very solid trained alert and is a very good competitor!



From: **Kerin Jacob-Schwartz** Baci dei Terra Incognita practicing Nosework during a Vehicles search. He just received his NW1 title at the Shamrock Pot of Gold Trials in NJ in Nov 2014 and placed 2nd overall in the competition. He took third place in Containers search and received a Pronounced in Exteriors search.



From **Terry Jamieson**: Rocco and I completed our first level of Nosework last year. We will be working on level 2 this year. We live in PA and passed NW1 in Stroudsburg, PA in September 2014.

Rocco, Bella and Luca all do nosework but Rocco is the only one that has passed NW1. They all love the pool and sitting on the tables and chairs on the patio and at the pool.



"Searching East of the Mississippi" Continued from page 5

with her! The alternative was the most expensive doggy diet in the world as Eppy really did enjoy her truffles. Then there were the bitterly cold days. Eppy thrived on the cold weather and was always ready to continue the search. I was bundled up like an Eskimo and Dr Micheals was muttering constantly under his breath as he used a little pick ax to break through the frozen ground to the truffles... "I'm gonna learn to grow these things in pots... In greenhouses..." In the spring of 2011 we imported Truffle Hunter Brenda in partnership with Dr Micheals. Brenda was a lovely girl with a great temperament and was started in truffle searching. Brenda leaves for work at Tennessee Truffles shortly after Thanksgiving and returns in late February or March. From her first day of work she has proven her worth. (Brenda

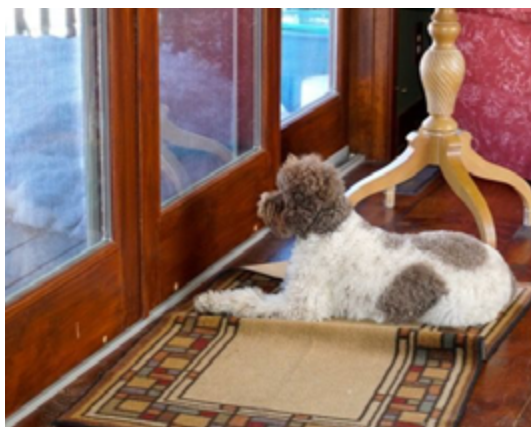
has also represented the breed at RDOD for the AKC event in Raleigh, NC and at the LRCA Meet the Breed booth at Eukanuba). There is one other truffle grove in Tennessee that is commercially producing perigord truffles. It and Tennessee Truffles are the only producing commercial groves in the southeastern US and may well be the only groves doing so in the eastern US at this time. However, there have been a number of groves planted in the last few years in Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia and other eastern states. It will be interesting to watch as these groves move towards maturity and - hopefully - production of the elusive perigord truffle.



Questions? We have Answers!

Toni Kay-Wolff

Toni is starting a column of Questions and Answers. She will answer training questions and will seek advice if she doesn't know the answer. You can post a question to Toni to Bollettino@LagottoUS.com or direct a question to her on Facebook or the Lagotto Yahoo Group to be discussed in our next issue.



Waiting for something to move



An "alternate" behavior

• I was wondering if you could offer any advice for my 20 month old Lagotto. Marco barks at the doorbell and at our fence when people walk by. We live on a golf course so a lot of people walk by. For the doorbell I send him to his place but he gets so worked up that I have a hard time getting him to focus on me and not want to jump on whoever is at the door. He's not aggressive at all - just wants to be the first one to the door. I've tried to get him to bark so I could tell him to stop but I can't get him to bark for me. I've tried frustrating him into barking (holding his toys or food and trying to rev him up) but that doesn't work either. Regarding the fence, I try to keep him inside as much as possible keep them out of sight as much as possible (shades). As I have found not all things work with all dogs so I was hoping you could offer some advice.

• First, let me say that I know exactly what you are dealing with. I have worked with many dogs with this problem in my practice over the years. So the first thing is, forget about trying to get him to bark so that you can tell him to be quiet. Since dogs link the action with the word we use, telling him "quiet" while he is barking will not make sense to him. Here's what I do: 1. Dog barks, I allow 3-4 barks, more if it's someone I don't know or expect at my door. Fewer if it is barking at random people, and sometimes not at all if it's people on the golf course, as you describe. No reason for him to bark at that. 2. After the allowable number of barks, I call them to me. Praise them for coming, and reward THAT. Release and call them back again if the stimulus is still there and they are still reacting. Repeat as needed.

Goal: Bark bark~ Marco, Come! Good boy! Treat and Marco begins just coming to find you automatically while he is barking, instead of focusing on the stimulus and barking at it. **If you need a long line on him to be sure he comes to you, use it. Don't rely on a recall you don't have. This will only teach him not to listen when he's over-stimulated. 3. Once he's no longer barking, usually right after you give the treat, use the word you want him to respond to, either "quiet" or "enough" or "that'll do" or "thank you". I make sure I get plenty of opportunities to reward the fact that the dog ISN'T barking and reward it. Repeat. Use any opportunity you can to catch him being quiet, and use the command you've chosen, and reward immediately. Don't be stingy, and be quick about the reward. Don't wait for him to start barking again. **You want to reward quickly and frequently (think "quiet, good boy FEED) Most people wait WAY too long to reward, the dog goes right back to the unwanted behavior immediately after being fed and that isn't what we want. The best way to work on this isn't when you really need it, it's when you have the

Continued next page



time and someone to help you set it up. That might mean doing the “fake visitor at the door” (you knock on something, he thinks someone is there, and you get to practice and build muscle memory for what you want). You can graduate to the doorbell, and you can use someone he knows to ring it, practice the command, reward, and then you can also continue using your “place” command, but tether him to his spot, stay there, and reward his staying there and being quiet. ****Helpful hint: Using a leash while practicing certain behaviors is crucial to success. If dogs think they don’t have to, they usually won’t. I hope you find this helpful, keep me posted and I’ll work with you as you go. Good luck!**

• What do you recommend for a dog that insists on dragging you along on the walk? I’ve heard from so many Lagotto owners with this problem and the answers they have received from other trainers tend to rely on different types of collars or leashes. What say you, the experts?

• Thanks for asking this question, as it is the bane of many a dog owner’s existence! The problem is that most people don’t realize that dogs have an “opposition reflex”. In a nutshell, it means that when they feel pressure in one direction (picture pulling them back on a leash and collar as they try to drag you forward) they will pull hard in the other direction to get away from it. Counterproductive, right? Here is a great game I teach to help the dog understand “position”. We want the dog to learn to do the work and take responsibility for being in the proper position, which is their head at our left leg. The more we try to “make” them do it, the less successful we tend to be. I have several games I teach to help owner and dog with this, here’s just one of them. *How to Teach Your Dog to Walk at Your Left Side on a Loose Leash.* Goal: To teach your dog “position” while walking on a loose lead... his head at your left leg. What you’ll need: Equipment: Long line (at least 10 ft, but no more than 20 ft) The idea is NOT to use a short leash for control. We are teaching the dog to keep themselves in position and for you not to rely on your leash. Your leash is an “emergency break”, not a control tool.

Food reward in a bait bag, NOT your pocket (use something soft, smelly, super delicious, and easy on the tummy, like small bits of steak the size of your pinky nail, or chicken dogs microwaved until a bit crisp and not slippery) You can use Polly-O string cheese diced, but small pieces


Closed shoes (no sandals/flip flops please, you may be backing up and I don’t want you to fall). A hungry dog (very important for picky eaters!)

1. Start with a long line, hold the loop around your RIGHT thumb, closing your fist around the loop completely.
2. Fill your bait bag or back pocket with your treats, and have PLENTY of them. Keep them on your right side if you use a bait bag.
3. Begin walking away from your dog, silently, at a normal pace. Do NOT look at your dog. Look where you are going, and move with confidence, but still relaxed. SMILE!
4. When your dog catches up to you on your left side, smile, verbally tell him how fabulous he is (you can mark this with a clicker or just a verbal marker, like “Yes”), and feed him at the SEAM OF YOUR LEFT



PANT LEG . Your hand is touching the seam of your left pant leg. HE FOUND THE SPOT! If he stays at your left side, continue feeding every few seconds while you continue verbally praising him. NO PETTING PLEASE!

5. *If he leaves your side, you go silent. NEUTRAL. You continue to walk, but look for him peripherally...keep your head straight and walk calmly and clearly in the direction you want to go, but when he catches up to you, PARTY! Mark it, feed him, and have fun!*
6. *As you are walking, he will often get behind you or appear at your right side, and when he does, you turn LEFT to try to help him FIND THE SPOT. Once he finds the spot, you FEED him and smile and party again! He leaves the spot, you go silent.*

Play this game in your back yard, then front, down the driveway and back, up and down the block. You'll soon find your dog on your left, loose leash, just waiting for you to feed him at your left pant leg .

Toni Kay-Wolff is a professional dog trainer and owner of the Well Mannered Dog in CT. dogtrnr@mac.com www.wellmannereddog.com

Meet the Breed and Eukanuba Show in Orlando **Eddie Tuttle**

On December 14, 2014, new members Glenn and Eddie Tuttle of Punta Gorda, Florida, attended "Celebrate Dogs!" in Orlando, Florida, which included Meet the Breed and dog show competitions presented by Eukanuba and the American Kennel Club. At the Lagotto Romagnolo Club of America's booth, the Tutttles were happy to meet Club President Adrienne Perry, Board Member Andrea Szegeti and Jacki Barbieri, and their beautiful Lagottos. Adrienne's girl, Jetta looked great in the ring and took home ribbons.



LRCA President's Letter

Adrienne Perry

This has been a very busy month for the LRCA board! Since reaching our goal of moving our beloved breed toward full recognition, our focus has been to re-examine and re-align the club's financial policies to make us run more like an efficient business with the proper tax status. As you might not be aware, our former Treasurer Kathleen Correll, has resigned due to health issues and we are welcoming new treasurer, Bill Wilson, this month. If you are waiting for a refund or re-embursement for any reason, it should be coming to you shortly! Working with board member Lisa Sobon, Bill is updating our accounts as well as getting the club's tax filing status in order. We hope to go back to selling club merchandise in the near future when we have a clear picture of the sales tax that the club will need to pay. Thanks to our members' support we are in the wonderful position of having to make sure that our income is properly handled and recorded! Such a luxury! Also this month, we are beginning to move from our old website host to a newly designed format. Much of the old, out of date material has been removed from the website to assist in making the transfer of information from one website to another the most economical for the club. Thank you to the many volunteers working on this: especially Leslie Arner, Cody Hilton, Kerin Jacob-Schwartz and Sandy Mignogna. We aren't the only ones with a new website. AKC has also done a major overhaul. If you go to our breed page on www.akc.org you will see the lovely Panettone di Terra Incognita CM5 "Tony" owned by LRCA members Lisa and Robert Sobon and Jacki Barbieri (the dog in black and white) and in color Nostyffeln's Ottima Opera CM BN RN "Jetta" owned by myself and Jane "Cubby" Lash. These 2 dogs were the Eukanuba Best of Breed winners for 2013 (Tony) and 2014 (Jetta), and were invited by AKC to come for a photo and video shoot while in Florida. My understanding is that people can add pictures of their own dogs by tweeting them with the appropriate hash tags.....so check it out! Finally, this month saw our Meet the Breed at Westminster booth named First place in the Meet the breed booth competition for the Miscellaneous Group! It is easy to think that these competitions are all about the booth decorations....but that isn't all of it. Booths are judged by the friendliness, helpfulness, and knowledge given by the volunteers! This was a great group effort of volunteers braving the weather to drive into New York City for a jam packed day! Hearty congratulations to the group headed up by Alvina Schuett-Estes. On the horizon, we will be applying for full licensed status at the completion of our membership renewal cycle which allows us to do some long range planning on a National Specialty. Board member Theresa Nehemiah is working on establishing the necessary requirements for applying for non profit status for a Lagotto Rescue organization. We have also just completed our membership volunteer survey, so we hope to be putting some of you to work on important breed club projects. And finally our breeder application process, overseen by the health committee is almost ready to begin accepting documents. What an honor it is to work with you, board members and club members all! For the breed. 🐶

Oregon Black Truffle & Dandelion Fritters

Submitted by Alana McGee

**This recipe is a great one to do with kids!*

4 cups of fresh picked dandelion flowers (everyone has these in their yard!)
2 cups flour
2 eggs
2 cups milk (for extra umph you can use milk infused with truffles!)

Mix the milk, flour and eggs and whisk

Warm some olive oil in a skillet on the stove (keep at medium heat). Holding the underneath of the flowers, dip into the batter until totally covered in the fritter batter then place into skillet, flower side down.

Once they are brown, flip and brown the other side. If need be, continue flipping until the batter coating is light brown.

Remove from oil and allow excess oil to soak onto a towel or paper towel.

Then add your shaved Oregon black truffle which adds a fruity sweetness, and a touch of maple syrup or honey if you want! Heavenly!

Be creative – add your favorite spices or herbs to the fritter batter!



What Good Breeders Do

LRCA Health Education Chair, Therese Williams

What Good Breeders Do; What Good Owners Ask (or Should) When people are looking to buy a puppy from a breeder.

I am always struck by how the excitement of getting the new family member can override the need to ask a breeder some serious questions, and expect honest answers back. Think: caveat emptor or “let the buyer beware”.

In my perfect world, every person who begins their puppy search should educate themselves first about breeders and what is considered reasonable and customary standards for a reputable breeding program as well as what clauses to look for in contracts.

First, let’s discuss what makes a good breeder from the beginning. Everyone has to start somewhere, but how did the breeder get “educated” on proper breeding practices in the first place? Did they take a class, read a book, get a mentor, or just decide to try it. Or worse, were they somehow “required” to breed per their contractual terms from where they got their puppy, and really don’t want to breed at all. Perhaps they have been showing dogs, or doing various types of events and want to take the next step.

Think of breeding as a health occupation. That usually requires some degree of knowledge through reading, research, taking a course, talking with other reputable breeders, visiting other breeder’s facilities, and being mentored. Also important is having some general health knowledge about the breed, the diseases, what those diseases mean, basic veterinary care, nutrition, genetic testing, and how to best provide complete environmental enrichment for the dogs and puppies they plan to raise.

Once those considerations are fully understood and good systems established, then it is a matter of having the right dogs to breed. Dogs with major faults and are clearly no of breedable quality should not be bred. While no dog is perfect, the breeder should be looking for breeding dogs that come as close as possible to the breed standard, and are fully tested for any genetic defects so as not to produce puppies that are affected with genetic or health issues. The breeder needs to be able to prove what they say about their dog is true. Puppy buyers should ask.

For the Lagotto Romagnolo, the baseline testing that is required for any dog to be bred is: OFA eye certification exam, OFA hips (or PennHip), BFJE (benign familial juvenile epilepsy) and Lagotto SD (Storage Disease). Eyes need to “pass” for no genetic abnormalities that can be transferred to puppies, hips need to be in breedable range, and if one of the dogs is a carrier of BFJE and/or Lagotto SD, then the dog they are bred to has to be tested as clear. Carrier to carrier is not allowed for good reason, nor should any BFJE or SD affected dog be bred. A breeder should always be happy to let a person see test results and should always complete all required tests before breeding.



Continued

Once the breeder has certain knowledge, the next important consideration is temperament. Are the breeding dogs shy? Are they fearful? Do they show aggression that is unwarranted and unprovoked? Breeders should always consider the mental stability of their dogs and dogs that swing to each side of the spectrum of behavior should not be considered in a breeding program. The Lagotto Romagnolo breed standard describes the correct temperament as: The Lagotto is tractable, undemanding, keen, affectionate, very attached to his owner and easy to train. He is also a very good companion and an excellent watch-dog. The dog should be neither aggressive nor overly shy.

This is only the beginning. There is a lot more to identifying a good breeder. Potential owners, if not told, should ask the questions below, and breeders should disclose answers in a clear and complete way. Vague answers to these questions should raise a red flag to any potential buyer.

Sire and Dam: Can I see the parents? While the sire may not always be onsite, any breeder should always be happy to let you see the puppy's mother at bare minimum. Notice how she reacts to you and her behavior. The puppies get a lot of their early knowledge from how their mother acts. Pay attention to this. The breeder should have pictures and copies of certification on the sire, even if he is owned by someone else.

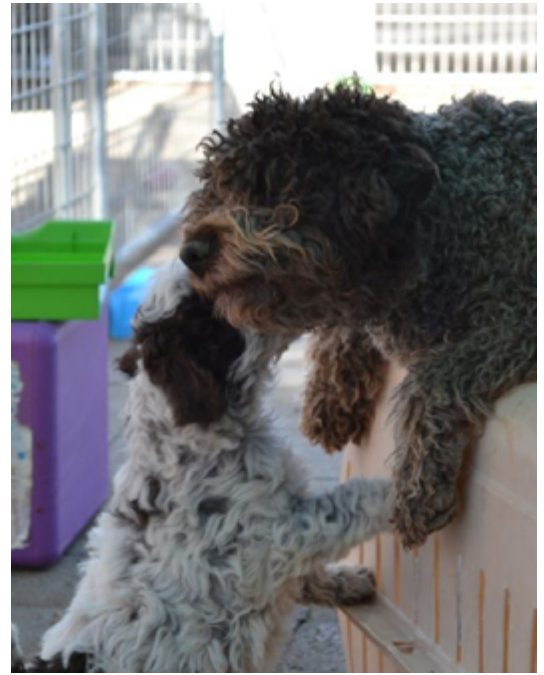
Socialization: Where do you keep the puppies? How do you interact with them? Puppies need constant mental, physical, environmental and social stimulation as they develop. Dr. Carmen Battaglia in his study called "Breeding Better Dogs" cites various research articles on this very topic. (http://breedingbetterdogs.com/pdfFiles/articles/early_neurological_stimulation_en.pdf). In the human world, there has been an enormous change in how early we begin the development in children, and early childhood education has taken on a whole different focus in recent years. Why would this not apply to dogs as well? Breeders should learn and develop increasing ways to develop the canine brain as the puppy grows.

Enriched Environment: How do you as a breeder reduce fear potential in the puppies? How do you get them used to scary things to reduce fears? Along with socialization, breeders need to expose puppies from early ages to all kinds of noises, sights, textures, surfaces, people, etc. to help them be confident dogs. There is a good website that sells various tapes that help reduce noise fears in not just puppies, but adult dogs as well. It is called "Through a Dogs Ear" (<http://throughadogsear.com/>) and a good resource for breeders and owners. A proper enriched environment can make all the difference in how a puppy's brain development will translate over to the behavior as an adult dog.

Nutrition: What do you feed your dogs and why? Lots of variety here in the types of food given, but any breeder should be feeding a high quality diet and know it is balanced and giving the dog all the appropriate nutrients.

Living Space: Where are the puppies kept? Going hand in hand with socialization, puppies need human interaction and not kept in crates and "out of the way", nor should they be kept outside

Continued next page



Hey Mom, get off that crate and let me nurse



Visiting a friendly vet



Learning new places, textures under Mom's watchful eye

in the elements where they have no protection.

Sanitation: Where do the dogs and puppies sleep and play? While puppies are extremely messy and the need to clean is constant, the space the puppies occupy needs to be as clean as possible. If they are living in squalor and it is obvious that their area has not been properly cleaned regularly, this is an invitation for illness and disease. Plus, it is just darn nasty. Puppies that are kept clean are easier to housebreak as well. If a puppy's living and sleeping space is not kept clean, they begin to feel that living in their own urine and feces is normal and will begin not to care.

Potential New Owners: Why do I have to fill out an application? If the breeder is worth their weight in salt, then yes, you need to fill out an application before being considered as a puppy owner.

Breeders need to know that the puppies they produce are going to proper homes that will care for them in a way that will give the puppy the best life they can have. They will Google you, they will pull up your address online and see where you live, they will ask for references, they want to know if you have a Veterinarian, and who that is, they want to know if you have had dogs or other animals before and what happened to them, and so much more. Of course, breeders should also encourage any new owner to do the exact same thing and make sure the breeder is not a puppy-mill, is not wanted by the police, or whatever. Both parties need to represent themselves in an honest manner and be who they say they are. No false pretenses on either side.

Contracts: What about contracts? Are they negotiable? The answer is an absolute "yes." Every owner needs to feel comfortable with what they are agreeing to sign. Transversely, every breeder needs not to be pressured by owners to water-down a contract, either. Contracts need to specify what the breeder commits to, and what the new owner will do. For the most part, contracts for puppies should be sold on spay/neuter contracts. Owners should never sign any contract with clauses that they just can't live with just to get a puppy. There are other breeders and other puppies will become available. Breeders should never hold new owners to clauses that are not only uncomfortable for the owner, but inappropriate (such as requiring an owner to breed a female dog so the breeder can sell them and make a profit). If a person is happy to do so and willing to work with the breeder, then the contract should have some type of equitable clause for the owner of the dog. Yes, contracts are negotiable.

Resources: What is the best way to train my puppy? What food should I feed? How do I groom? What if this and what if that? There are dozens of questions that new owners have and good breeders always give information, preferably in written form, for new owners giving them all the tips for raising a quality puppy. The breeder should always be a resource for any person purchasing from them, for the life of the dog. Good breeders always want to know how the dogs they bred are doing, receive photos, stories, etc. This is a long term relationship that owners and breeders will forge, and keeping that open line of communication is expected. Breeders who sell and don't stand behind their dogs or care to know how they are doing, is

Continued next page



Learning different elevations, smells, and experiencing water




Meeting new people



Puppy Temperament testing

just not an acceptable practice.

Taking the Puppy or Dog Back: What if something happens and I can't keep the dog? Every good breeder will take one of their bred dogs back for life, period. If they can't, they will work with the owner to find another home close to the current owner if possible. If still a puppy, and things just did not work out, the breeder usually requires the puppy to come back. While there is no set rule for refunds given to the owner in the case a puppy does not work out, generally most breeders will give refunds up to a few weeks of placement, minus any travel/shipping costs the breeder would pay. This needs to be clearly defined in a breeder's contract.

A person once said to me that "breeding is not for wimps." Being a breeder that is doing all they can to produce quality puppies is a boatload of work. Those that try to cut corners or deceive new owners with false promises, statements and pretenses will probably always exist. If puppy buyers don't inquire about these things, breeders need to take the initiative and walk them through the questions and answers they need to make an informed and educated decision. 



Who couldn't resist a Lagotto puppy face?

New members


December

Douglas Kreitzberg -Newtown Square, PA (Regular)
 Susan Sholar -Temecula, CA (Regular)
 JoAnn Weitman Brewster, NY (Associate)
 Peter Turtzo-Bangor, PA (Regular)
 Linda Ames -Eatonville,WA (Regular)
 Mary Smith-Pittsburgh, PA (Associate)
 Nicholas Nichini -Lansdale, PA (Associate)
 Connie Koenig, Mt. Washington, KY (Regular)
 Deanna Jakubowsky, Wading River, NY (Associate)
 Maria Wiklund, Syracuse, NY (Regular)
 Cecilia Deleon & Thomas Ogorzalek, Jersey City, NJ (Dual)
 Marissa Fraering, Los Angeles, CA (Associate)


January:

Joy Nachmias -Conestoga, PA (Associates)
 Dana & Dale Volpe - Austin, TX (Dual)
 Michael Brodie - Las Vegas, NV (Regular)
 Jessica Neumann- Iron Mountain, MI (Regular)
 Cathy Winkler - Traverse City, MI (Regular)
 Beverly Hoops - Coatesville, IN (Associates)

February:

Eddie & Glenn Tuttle Punta Gorda FL (Dual)
 Gary Ciminero- Warwick RI(Associate)
 Carol Aten- Portland ME (Regular)
 Justin Faralli- Philadelphia PA (Associate)
 Wendy DeBoskey- Denver CO (Regular)
 Mark Fabian- Valley Center CA (Regular)
 Catherine Foss- Saratoga CA (Associate) 

The LRCA Website

Our website is under construction! It has been many months in the making, but we are moving forward with our plan to build a new website. This will be an amazing change for the Club. We are excited and cannot wait for our Go Live date, but this will take time and much energy from our hard working volunteers. So we ask for your patience and support during this time as we make changes on the current site. In the near future, you may notice changes or omissions in our existing website as we prepare for the migration to the new site. However, the functionality will remain the same for such things as renewals and applications. Please stop by the LRCA Facebook page for news and updates during this construction period, or contact Leslie Arner, Recording Secretary at secretary@lagottous.com with any questions. And last but definitely not least, a HUGE thank you to those who have helped bring us to this point. Your dedication and hard work are greatly appreciated by all that will benefit from the new LRCA website. 

LRCA Board Meeting Highlights

Collected by Judith Martin

Regular meetings of the BoD are held the 2nd Sunday of the month at 7:30 Eastern time. If you wish to attend the phone conference, please contact Secretary Leslie Arner: Secretary@LagottoUS.com.

Following are unofficial highlights of some of the motions and discussion. Approved Board Minutes are posted in the "member" pages on LRCA website: www.lagottous.com. Click the link on the date.


December 7, 2014

1. Advertising rates for members and non-members in the Bollettino were voted on. Lisa Sobon will be Board liaison to Bollettino
2. New breeder listing form was discussed
3. Judges Education: Jacki Barbieri will go to Puyallup, WA for a 2 days education program Jan. 10-11, 2015. She is working on illustrated standard and video educational materials
4. Marketing: 294 calendars have been sold.
5. Membership: New application forms have been developed. It will take minimum for approval of new applications. Only single year renewals will be offered to simplify bookkeeping.
6. Rescue and relocation: We are working to set up a 501 (c) (3). Need many more volunteers.

January 18, 2015

1. New Bylaws have been approved by a vote 97 yes and 14 no. Changes are effective immediately.
2. Board Member Sandy Mignogna is new chair of Breed Education Committee
3. Judges Education: Goal is to have regional teams
4. Marketing Committee: Kerin Jacob-Schwartz will chair the committee.
5. Open Show: 86 entries to our show during Eukanuba week
6. Website redesign: Board Secretary Leslie Arner is heading up the site changes assisted by Cody Hilton, Membership Chair Liz Williams and Sandy Mignogna. WildApricot software will be purchased.
7. Meet The Breed booth: Guidelines and training manual has been written by Sandy Mignogna and Lisa Sobon.

February 8, 2015

1. Funds approved to hire CPA to research tax guidelines.
2. Kerin Jacob-Schwartz approved to the new Board position of Corresponding Secretary.
3. Kerin approved to be a member of Breed Education Committee. The committee will be working to update the club website.
4. Marketing Committee will be reviewing vendors for club logo merchandise. 

Considering Breeding... ?

If you are thinking of breeding your Lagotto, you need to consider the following:

1. Does your Lagotto have a good temperament?

2. Is he/she a good representative of the breed type and conformation?

3. Have you reviewed the agreement (if any) with your breeder to determine if your puppy was sold with a "restricted from breeding" clause?

4. Have you checked your AKC FSS papers to see if your dog has a limited (from breeding) registration?

5. Have you reviewed the LRCA Code Ethics to be sure that you are in compliance with the rules pertaining to breeding a litter and placing puppies?

Note: be sure to read the new mandatory requirements on LSD testing to make sure you are in compliance with future breedings.

Upcoming Events

July 2015

The Lagotto Romagnolo enters the Sporting Group with the AKC.

Board Meetings are held on 2nd Sunday of the month at 7:30 EDT. Contact club Secretary if you would like to attend.

Minutes from past Board Meetings can be found in the members section of the club website: www.LagottoUS.com

LCA Board Members for 2015

President:	Adrienne Perry
Vice President:	Lisa Sobon
Secretary:	Leslie Arner
Treasurer:	Bill Wilson
Director:	Theresa Nehemiah
Director:	Andrea Szegeti
Director:	Sandy Mignogna

LCA Website: www.lagottous.com

AKC: www.akc.org

Bollettino Editorial Team:

Judith Martin, Alana McGee, Toni Kay-Wolff, Hllarie Gibbs-Sykes, Mel Sykes, Cathy Dronen, Eddie and Glenn Tuttle:

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WWW.TRUFFLEDOGCOMPANY.COM

Club Member Yahoo Group:

If you haven't subscribed to the member-only yagoo group, here is the link:
<mailto:lrcofa-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>

Therese Williams Health Education Chair

Notice

The items in the Bollettino are submitted by club members, or other persons with special information to share with the membership. These are strictly the opinions of the writers and do not reflect an official stance of LRCA. Items submitted are edited by the Bollettino team. Official club information from the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs will be signed with their name and Board Title.

