



# ***Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance***

## ***Powhatan, Virginia***

### ***January 12, 2009***

*This New Year Virginia's Sportsmen have a great deal to be thankful for, but very little of our joy comes from the political world as our enemies are continuing their attacks on our Hunting Heritage. To make matters worse, the economy is now a major challenge. We are all blessed with plentiful wildlife and freedom. Our Freedom is guaranteed by American fighting men and women that volunteer to go in harm's way to protect what we hold dear. We must remain vigilant of the actions that take place in both Washington and Richmond so that we will continue to enjoy the best traditions of free people.*

*This Newsletter contains a number of important action items that all belong as a lead articles because your action is urgently needed. As the New Year begins so too the General Assembly will return to Richmond on January 14th. Please read on!*

## **DGIF BOARD DIRECTS DUNCAN TO TAKE HOUND STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Directors of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF), staff was directed to take action to implement the recommendations from the "Hound Study". There are three types of action that can be taken. Administrative actions can deal with things such as improved record keeping. Regulations will be used to modify existing regulations that are not set by law such as some of the training/chase seasons or requiring Identification Tags for dogs that would include Hunt Club names. The third type of action that may be take is legislative actions (LAW) to modify the Right to Retrieve law or ask for more money from the legislature for Law Enforcement.

If you think that the Hound Study recommendations did not amount to anything and the fight is over you are wrong!

## **CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS NOW!**

Call or write your Delegate and State Senator and ask them to fight ANY amendment to the Right-to-Retrieve law (§ 18.2-136). Ask them to:

"Please oppose any change to Section 18.2-136. This law protects landowners, hunters and their dogs.

(continued on Page 2 see: Legislators Now!)

## **LEGISLATORS NOW! (continued from Page 1)**

It enables the timely retrieval of dogs that prevent their injury, prevents landowner liability for harm that occurs to the dogs and enables the ethical hunter to responsibly retrieve their dogs.”

**Contact your members of the General Assembly by phone or email NOW:** <http://conview.state.va.us/whosmy.nsf/main?openform>

## **LEGISLATIVE ALERTS**

With the beginning of the General Assembly Session watch for our Legislative Alert email messages that will require a quick response from you and your hunting friends.

The monthly magazine Cooperative Living has its helpful insert <http://www.co-opliving.com/community/09LegislativeGuide.pdf> that provides you with all the contact information needed to be in touch with your members of the General Assembly. Print it now to help your friends know their legislators.

## **DGIF WANTS TO SPEND \$14 MILLION OF YOUR MONEY FOR NEW HQ BUILDING**

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> DGIF Board meeting a plan to replace the Head Quarters facility was unveiled as a cost saving matter. The plan was to lease a large building in the I-95 corridor in Hanover County north of Richmond for a new HQ. This would replace the three buildings currently in use on West Broad Street. Two buildings are old and may have asbestos, although the State did a major asbestos abatement program in the early eighties. The last of these building we are told regularly floods. DGIF was warned not to buy the building because it was commonly known to flood regularly!

Now DGIF has put in a budget request to spend \$14 Million of your hunting license dollars to build, lease or renovate a new HQ building. This amount is typically about one third of their annual budget; even if they spread it over a number of years it will have a major impact on funds available! The economy has caused many Richmond companies to down size. Certainly there is suitable space to lease in the Richmond area that will meet their needs and save Sportsmen’s dollars.

This action is an extravagant waste of Sportsmen’s money at a time when everyone but your government is tightening its belt! DGIF has reduced its maintenance and resource management efforts on many of its Wildlife Management areas citing lack of funds. It appears that they are putting empire building above wildlife management and protection of your outdoor sporting heritage. Are they spending money to counter the attacks on hunting by the Animal Right groups?

## **STATE POLICE RAID DOG BREEDER SEIZE 63 DOGS ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS DISTORT TRUTH ABOUT CONDITIONS!**

Eight State Police officers carrying search warrants raided the home of Dave Winesett, a mom and pop Carroll County Commercial dog breeder on November 14th. It was alleged that he had abused and neglected his dogs. Sixty-three dogs were seized, including his two Walker Coonhounds and his wife's small terrier. Dave served as Carroll Co. Animal Control Officer for nine years during the seventies.

There have been many newspaper and TV stories about this seizure, but most have been misleading and even false. We are reporting this incident because this is a harbinger of things to come and is a classic "Animal Rights" assault on an honest citizen. A captain and seven sergeants conducted the raid along with a representative of the State Veterinarian's office and private citizens that volunteered to assist. Informed sources told us that they came onto private property based on a complaint from Animal Rights (AR) activists that had allegedly trespassed on that property. They indicated that the warrant had pictures alleging that specific dogs had been neglected and showing the kennels. The pictures were alleged to be of the kennels were taken illegally (trespassing) and the pictures of the dogs were said to be from another person's dogs that had been seized the year before!

Note that Mr. Winesett's kennel had been inspected just TWO WEEKS before by a Carroll County Animal Control Officer. He found only a couple of minor violations, one of which was a dog whose toenails on one foot needed trimming! The State Police took out the warrant not in Carroll County.

VHDA helped Mr. Winesett retain Del. Terry Kilgore (R-Scott Co.) as his attorney. Delegate Kilgore turned the tide right from the beginning by having charges dismissed because they state police failed to schedule a hearing in the required time to insure a prompt hearing of the charges. Attorney General Bob McDonnell's office filed an appeal to Circuit Court, which denied the appeal. At the time of this Newsletter it is unclear whether the Attorney General Bob McDonnell (R) will appeal this to the Supreme Court of Virginia. We urge you to call his office (804) 786-3808 or email him at [McDonnell@oag.state.va.us](mailto:McDonnell@oag.state.va.us) and ask him not to appeal this case again.

Ask the State Vet Dr. Richard Wilkes: [Richard.Wilkes@VDACS.virginia.gov](mailto:Richard.Wilkes@VDACS.virginia.gov) and State Department of Agriculture (VDACS) Commissioner Todd Haymore: [Todd.Haymore@VDACS.virginia.gov](mailto:Todd.Haymore@VDACS.virginia.gov) to stop persecuting Dave Winesett!

Members of the VHDA Board including a retired Animal Control Officer (ACO) traveled to Carroll County and inspected Mr. Winesett's kennel and found that it was an enclosed building, heated with running water and feeders to each enclosure. The enclosures all exceeded the U.S. Department of Agriculture requirement for size and met or exceeded all other requirements! It was a commercial operation, but it was a good facility.

As this Newsletter is being written Mr. Winesett's dogs had not been returned to him! He has been informed that eight of his puppies have died of parvo virus. Obviously the "volunteer organization" neglected to give the puppies their shots as required! A legal defense Fund is being set up to help Dave with his legal fees. We hope to start a statewide fund in the near future that will help defend against unwarranted attacks on hunters and hunt clubs.

(continued on Page 4 see: Raid)

## **Raid (continued from Page 3)**

This is a sad commentary about the use of political power to try to carry out a radical agenda. Almost all dog owners oppose dog fighting and the illegal activities that surround this heinous practice, but the AR folks are using that publicity to attack you. We can only hope that the citizens of Virginia will get the word about this abuse of authority in the name of Animal Rights! Remember these people do not care about animal welfare; they are selling a bogus concept of Animal Rights!

# **HSUS LEADER CONVICTED FOR STEALING HUNTING DOG!**

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), and the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (P.E.T.A.) are your enemies in the fight to save your Outdoor Sporting Traditions! In 2008, two Richmond County women were charged with removing the tracking collar and stealing a hunting dog. One of those women the 70-year-old Chairman of the Richmond County Humane Society was convicted of a felony. The other woman has not had her trial yet. In Lancaster County, two more Humane Society officials have been charged with theft of hunting dogs. In Centreville, VA, two members of the Angles of Assisi Animal Rescue have been charged with 28 counts of animal cruelty. They were convicted on October 1, 2008 and were awaiting sentencing. This is the same group involved with the Winesett case.

Remember that in 2007 P.E.T.A. killed 90.9 percent of dogs given it to find homes for! These groups are POLITICAL ACTION organizations that pretend to care about animal welfare but really have a far left agenda. The HSUS web site encouraged people not to eat turkey at Thanksgiving but to eat substitutes like tofu for meat. The HSUS is running full-page ads in newspapers to urge elected official and DGIF to ban hunting with dogs. If you check the web sites of these organizations you will find that they want to ban the ownership of domesticated animals! They want people to be vegetarians or vegans. The HSUS brags about the lawsuits it has filed against egg producers, poultry farms, horse breeders, and polar bear hunting. These groups and others are running TV commercials on satellite and cable stations seeking contributions. All of these groups want to ban hunting. The following message was posted to a web site recently:

### **Attempt to ban hunting dogs in VA...**

I got an e-mail from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) asking me to send letters to elected officials to help ban hunting dogs in VA. I don't hunt, but I also don't see why they should ban these dogs. I know for many hunters it's a family tradition and something they've done since their folks got off the boats way back in the day. Anybody know of an effort to counter the HSUS effort?

## HUNTING DOGS SHOT, HUNTING DOGS AND TRACKING COLLARS STOLEN

We have received many reports about dogs being shot or hunting dogs that had tracking collars and were being followed, stolen. Reports come from Amelia, Louisa, Caroline, Brunswick, Greenville, Richmond and Lancaster Counties. Because there have been so many reports we are creating a database to keep a record of these criminal acts. There will be a form on our web site to report the theft and other helpful information. We have also had a number of hunting dogs that were shot. These cases must be prosecuted!

If your hunting dog is missing and you believe it may have been stolen or it's tracking collar removed: **REPORT IT** to your local police or sheriff's office immediately! Remember to get a copy of the police report. If there is no report, nothing was filed! The more information that you can provide including the dogs replacement value and/or it's potential value for breeding the better the response will be from authorities.

## VIRGINIA ANIMAL RIGHTS GROUP ANNOUNCES IT'S LEGISLATIVE WISH LIST

These are the priority bills for 2009 from the Virginia Voters for Animal Welfare in *their own words*. You must work now to stop this radical agenda.

1. **humane investigator** – reinstate program
2. **sterilization bill** (FKA releasing agencies) – all dogs “released” to a new owner (i.e., adopted or purchased) must be sterile
3. **tax credits for vets** – vets receive tax credit for pro-bono work done for public pounds or “c3” organizations
4. **privatization** – the Office of the State Vet's responsibility for companion animals will be privatized

These are bills they may push if they can find a patron:

5. **elimination of kennel licenses** – because kennel licenses represent a very deep discount in the charge for licensing a dog, and because kennel dogs receive the same treatment as dogs having regularly-priced licenses in terms of their treatment by local pounds or animal control officers, that discount will be eliminated
6. **breeding ban** – any jurisdiction which euthanizes cats or dogs that are “excess” – i.e., are healthy and otherwise adoptable but have no home – or any jurisdiction which itself has had rabies cases, or is within 50 miles of a jurisdiction which has had rabies cases in the last 12 months – will not allow breeding of dogs or cats and the subsequent sale/adoption/giving away of such; this does NOT apply to adoptions from pounds, shelters or rescues
7. **tethering**

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8. **Board of Pharmacy** – addressing the issue of what medicines can be kept in pounds or shelters and under what circumstances they may be kept 9. abandonment, particularly of hunting dogs - could include making permanent identification mandatory; could include increasing the penalty currently in the code regarding abandonment

10. **ferals/TrapNeuterReturn and other cat issues** - addressing the issue of TNR not being a form of abandonment would be included along with ways to ensure that those who maintain feral colonies are free from harassment and/or legal prosecution

11. **license fee cap change** – would increase the ability of a jurisdiction to charge more than \$10 (the current “cap”) for a dog or cat license, but would not require a price increase

12. **humane education**

13. **dealer permits** – would require (currently the law allows, but does not require) those who “deal” with companion animals by selling, bartering, trading, giving/gifting, etc., would be required to hold a valid dealer permit in each jurisdiction in which they “deal”

**We will provide you with more on this if these bills appear in the legislature. Only a few bills have been filed as this Newsletter is being prepared. The next newsletter will detail the legislation that is being considered. Watch VHDA web site: [www.VAHDA.org](http://www.VAHDA.org) for the latest information. We will send out alerts as needed.**

## **RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Insist that those that you hunt with and that hunt in your neighborhood are ethical hunters. Never turn your dogs loose with the intention of chasing game across land that you do not have permission to hunt. Do not tolerate people that trespass to hunt. You have been granted the right to retrieve your dogs under strict conditions... Know the law and obey it.

Report ALL law violators! The few outlaws that are among us are not the reason for this attack, but we do not need to give anyone any ammunition to use against us.

Teach new hunters the right way to do things. Make sure that your dogs are well cared for and promote your sport!

## **HATS AND SHIRTS ON THE WEB SITE**

At long last you can now order VHDA hats and shirts from our web sight <http://www.vahda.org/ForSale.htm>. As demand increases we will offer other items. These items provide revenue to the VHDA in defense of your Heritage and allow you to show your support. Let us know what you think of this service.

## **DGIF Hunting Regulations on Website Becomes Attack on Hunting with Dogs**

Once again DGIF sought comment about it's regulatory proposals from the World Wide Web. While DGIF is funded by your hunting license money and not tax revenues (except for a very small amount of sales tax money), it continues to seek and encourage anti-hunting forces to attack your heritage by placing these items on an open forum on their website.

The comment period closed on January 5<sup>th</sup>. We will no doubt see the results at the February DGIF Board meeting. Final regulations will take effect of July 1, 2009

## **DEER POSTER/PUBLIC SAFTEY RESPONSE ON THE WEB**

In response to attacks by Animal Rights groups and their activists we have produced a public safety poster called "Deer through the Windshield" that you can print or have printed to tell non-hunters why hunting saves lives and money. For a few pennies you can go to Kinko's, Staples, Office Depot, etc. and have a color poster made. You can copy the file from our web sight <http://www.vahda.org/news.htm> and use it for a newspaper ad, a post to put up in the local stores and neighboring hunt clubs. This is something that all hunters can easily do to help get a positive message about hunting into their community.

## **HELP GIVE US A VOICE – DONATE TO THE VHDA TODAY**

Membership in your Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance costs nothing. We the Board believe that there is strength in numbers and that by not having a membership fee the Alliance will grow faster and give a voice to more people. The generosity of our member clubs, organizations and individual members has enabled us to "Have a seat at the table" when your rights are being discussed. We have strived to be responsible stewards of your money. We believe that we will face a barrage of bills seeking to amend the Right-to-Retrieve and place other restrictions on hunting with dogs. Many of our opponents are extremely well funded.

In uncertain economic times we are asking all who can to contribute to the VHDA. Our victory fund will need to cover lobbying costs for the upcoming General Assembly and for supporting the re-election of our friends to the House of Delegates next year. We will help elect a Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General next year. If we don't help keep our friends in the legislature and get statewide office holders that support us we will face four more years of hard fights that may happen even with friends in office. We would not ask if there were a need.

(continued on Page 8 see: Help)



## **Help(continued from Page 7)**

Please help make to the your Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance strong by sending your donation to:

**Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance  
P.O. Box 657  
Powhatan, Virginia 23139.**

Contributions are not deductible for tax purposes

All VHDA Board members are real hunters who own dogs. The VHDA has no paid staff. We pay our own expenses because “We HAVE a dog in this fight!” If we sometimes sound angry, it is because we are! We would prefer to be hunting, teaching our children about the wonders that God has given us and training our dogs. We know that we must have a strong voice or we will lose to people, who not only disagree with you... but hate and revile you because you hunt.

*We pray for loving and forgiving hearts and that we will be ever mindful of the needs of others.*

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