



# *Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance*

## *Powhatan, Virginia*

### *February 17, 2009*

## **2009 General Assembly**

### **Your Heritage Safe for Another Year**

At the mid-point in this session of the General Assembly the fight to protect our Heritage appears to have ended for this session. Thanks to your phone calls, emails and personal contacts with your legislators there were no hunting bills that would damage your Hound Hunting. All of the Animal Rights bills died a quick death. One hunting bill to study urban and suburban duck hunting still needs to be addressed. The story would have been a great deal different if you had not acted.

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Board (DGIF) at its October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting directed Executive Director Bob Duncan to move forward with the recommendations derived from their "Hound Hunting Study". The direction was to draft regulations and proposed legislation necessary to carry out those proposals. Most of us realized that this would mean a modification of the Sam Goodloe Law (also known as the Right to Retrieve - § 18.2-136).

Please thank your members of the House of Delegates and Virginia Senate for their support for your hound hunting traditions without delay! The Republicans in the House were especially responsive to you, when they made it clear to all that they would not allow any harmful legislation to pass. The Republicans currently hold a majority in the House of Delegates. Those same friends also decided not to allow passage of any bill that would adversely affect dog ownership. There were a number of bad bills introduced that we will no doubt see again next year, but all were killed in sub-committee.

The session started with a Senate Agriculture Committee vote on **SB 950** by Janet Howell (D) – Reston that would permit any person to apply to magistrate for issuance of a summons for the owner of a dog alleged to be dangerous and vicious. Currently, the authority to go to the magistrate to obtain a summons is the responsibility of law-enforcement and animal control officers only. This would be a great way for an unfriendly neighbor or an animal rights activist to attack you and tie you up in court. This bill died in a tie vote 7-7 with one Democrat, Senator Northam of Norfolk voting against the bill. The vote was as follows:

YEAS (supporting the bill) —Ticer, Whipple, Reynolds, Puckett, Deeds, McEachin, Petersen—7. NAYS (opposing the bill) —Hanger, Watkins, Ruff, Blevins, Obenshain, McDougale, Northam—7.

(continued on Page 2 see: 2009 General Assembly)

## 2009 General Assembly (continued from Page 1)

The next bad bill that day was **SB 931** by Patricia Ticer (D – Alexandria), Chairwoman of the Committee - Clarifies that animal control officers, humane investigators, and employees of the State Veterinarian, who are obligated to prevent the perpetration of any act of cruelty upon any animal in their presence, shall enjoy the protection of sovereign immunity for those actions taken in good faith with reasonable cause. This bill would give immunity from prosecution to volunteers who invade your property as was done to Dave Winesette. The bill was withdrawn when the patron realized it would not pass in her own committee!

The worst bill of the session was **SB 1151** by Ryan McDougale (R- Mechanicsville). Senator McDougale's bill would require that an owner reclaiming a dog or cat from pound a second time must have animal spayed or neutered. The alert we sent out generated a great deal of response. Your calls helped turn the tide in the Senate Agriculture Committee. This was clearly an Animal Rights bill very similar to the bill HSUS pushed in California. Robin Starr, CEO of the Richmond SPCA, appeared before the full committee and repeated some of the same distortions that appear in her Richmond Times Dispatch Op Ed piece published the day before (see Newspapers page). One statement drew particular attention! Ms. Starr stated in open committee that there were 239,000 dogs euphemized by Virginia's pounds and shelters last year. Alice Harrington, representing the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Breeders, told the committee that a report by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs for the period in question showed that 41,000 dogs were euthanized. Ms. Harrington raised the report in her hand, offering to provide copies to the committee. The continued pattern of gross distortions of the truth by Animal Rights activists continues.

We acknowledge and thank Senator Richard Stuart (R – Westmoreland) for his lead in opposing this bill. Senator McDougale's bill failed to pass: 6-8-1

YEAS—Ticer, Whipple, Reynolds, Puckett, McDougale, McEachin—6. NAYS—Hanger, Watkins, Ruff, Blevins, Obenshain, Petersen, Northam, Stuart—8. ABSTENTIONS—Deeds—1

Senator Deeds, a candidate for the Democrat nomination for Governor, has once again turned his back on Sportsmen. Two other rural Democrats, Senator Reynolds (Martinsville) and Senator Puckett (Tazewell), voted for this very bad bill as they did for SB 950. If you chose to note disapproval of their votes please be polite. We need members of both parties to stand with us if we are to successfully maintain our Hound Hunting Heritage!

More complete information about the General Assembly session will be available shortly on our web site. **Please read on... a battle is won but the War rages on.**

## **DGIF Hound Study Costs Revealed**

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Board (DGIF) at its October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting heard a presentation about the findings from Dr. Steve L. McMullin of Virginia Tech on the Hound study. The Professor presented the following information that he claimed was intentional misinformation and disinformation (in Blue Bold) and "his truth" (in red):

(continued on Page 3 see: Study Costs)

## Study Costs (continued from Page 2)

The state spent \$250,000 on this project, money that could have been used to put more Conservation Police Officers (CPOs) in the field.

To date, VDGIF has spent about \$70,000 on the project and we are nearing the end of it.

Substantially less that (sic) the cost of hiring, training and equipping one CPO for one year

The information from this project will serve the agency as a valuable resource on stakeholder attitudes and technical information regarding hound-hunting for years.

Draft Minutes DGIF Board Mtg. - October 23, 2008, Draft Page 5.

This made for media sound bite was a deliberate attempt to conceal the truth about the true cost of this study. Dr. Steve McMullen added insult to injury by calling the sportsmen liars. This was compounded by the refusal of DGIF to respond to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request for the true figures. Everyone at this meeting, especially the DGIF leadership, knew that this figure could not be true. Our request, mailed certified return receipt requested and received by DGIF on November 14, 2008, was not answered in a manner prescribed by law, even in part, until January 14, 2009! The law requires a formal reply within five working days. There are provisions in the FOI act for extensions, but none were requested until well after the first of the year!

For any agency of government to so blatantly ignore the law is beyond the comprehension of most citizens, but for a Law Enforcement Agency to ignore the law totally destroys its credibility.

About sixty percent of the information requested by the FOI has been received as of the date of this Newsletter. Costs so far total \$215,000 of Sportsmen's money. Is it any wonder that Sportsmen and especially Houndsmen distrust the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries? Dr. McMullen had the temerity to call Houndsmen liars when he was actively trying to conceal the truth from us. His contempt for the average Sportsman is now completely exposed. So much for his academic integrity and the credibility of DGIF's study.

The DGIF Board and the senior staff of the agency have long engaged in a partisan political effort to damage hunting with dogs in Virginia:

1. They tried to make it illegal to use tracking collars, but were forced to back down.
2. They went to the news media saying there was a major increase in complaints about hound hunting, when confronted with their own facts to disprove what they were saying...
3. They tried to convince legislators that there were many complaints received by local law enforcement that were not included in their totals, but once again we gathered evidence that their statements were false.
4. By using the Internet and attempting to divide hunters, they invited the Radical Animal Rights Groups to become involved in the attack on our heritage and made no effort to respond themselves.
5. When Mounted Fox Hunters attacked the technical report as a blatant anti-hunting/animal rights document lacking any semblance of academic integrity DGIF refused to make any significant change. We are told a great deal of effort went into a 100-page rebuttal to the technical report and only one word of the original

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## Study Costs (continued from Page 3)

report was changed!

6. They decided to publicly attack the veracity of Virginia's Houndsmen by falsifying about the cause, cost and purpose of their study.
7. Now DGIF and Dr. McMullen want the public to believe there is value in their half-truths, outright lies and innuendo.

We have not even addressed their desire for a new headquarters building, on which they propose to spend \$14 million of Sportsmen's money!

If the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries wants our trust they have to begin telling the truth! They must then PROMOTE and DEFEND OUR HERITAGE! NOTHING LESS IS ACCEPTABLE! The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries must make major changes in their attitude toward the people that pay their salaries, the Sportsmen of Virginia!

## Newspaper Articles & Letters to the Editor

During the weeks leading up to the 2009 General Assembly session numerous "letters to the editor" were published in the daily and weekly papers of Virginia. Most of these "letters to the editor" were attacking hunting with hounds, many written by Don Marro of the Virginia Voters for Animal Welfare. We received copies of many of those letters from our members. We also received copies of letters some of you wrote in response. It is very important to respond to these negative letters because an unanswered lie told often enough becomes fact!

On Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, the Richmond Times Dispatch carried two "Op Ed" articles in it's Commentary section. "Sensible Rules Would Protect People, Property and Animals" ([http://www.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/STARR125\\_20090123-210812/187277/](http://www.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/STARR125_20090123-210812/187277/)) [click to view the article] by Robin Starr of the Richmond SPCA attacked Hunting with Hounds by repeating urban legends about abandoned and mistreated hunting dogs. Her point of view was no surprise as she had attacked Houndsmen the previous week when the Hanover County Board of Supervisors passed a local ordinance limiting kennels to fifty dogs. She claimed, "about one-fourth of the dogs the Richmond SPCA receives are hounds. Her comments are greatly offensive, especially in light of the fact that her shelter is a "no kill" shelter located in the capital city that has no hunting land and where hunting is not legal! Further more all dogs must be approved before they are even placed on her waiting list.

In testimony before the Senate Agriculture Committee hearing SB 1151, VHDA representative Kirby Burch asked the committee to consider that since the big city shelters were claiming large numbers of hunting dogs were received at their shelters, were these simply pets that were popular hunting breeds such as beagles and Labradors or were these shelters receiving stolen hunting dogs?

In an article entitled "Responsible hunting with hounds benefits everyone" ([http://www.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/BURCH125\\_20090123-210614/187264/](http://www.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/BURCH125_20090123-210614/187264/)) [click to view the article], Kirby Burch, of the VHDA, represented the ethical Houndsmen that make up our membership.

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## Letters (continued from Page 4)

Knowing that a flood of "Letters to the Editor" would follow, many of which would never be printed, we are going to print two of the best here so that you may have the benefit of their arguments. The first from VHDA Co-Chairman, Bryan Morris:

(continued on Page 4 see: Study Costs)

To the Editor:

I would like to applaud Ms. Star on her obvious affection for God's creatures. I have no question about her love of animals. I feel compelled to respond because I do have some experience in this area as a Houndsman and a veterinarian.

Negative generalizations about all Houndsmen are very offensive. It is unfair to judge a whole group by the illegal actions of the few. Sadly there are many cases of child abuse and neglect in Virginia, but that certainly does not mean that all or even most parents in Virginia condone or are guilty of child abuse. In 2008, we were all shocked by charges brought against PETA for illegal euthanasias in North Carolina, but that doesn't allow us to make broad assumptions that all animal rights activists are pet killers.

As a Virginia Houndsman, I followed the VDGIF hound study very closely. There are a few statements from Ms. Star's letter that warrant some correction. (1) In the early stages, the impetus of the hound study was reportedly an increase in complaints. Repeated requests for numbers of complaints went unanswered. The claim of increased complaints was proven to be unsubstantiated through the Freedom of Information Act requests. (2) The hound study did include animal welfare input. One of the members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee was a former president of the Virginia Animal Control Association. In fact, one of the focus groups was comprised specifically of animal welfare and animal rights groups. (3) The SAC did make recommendations. (4) She states 25% of the dogs she takes in are of hound lineage. Many hounds and hound crosses are/were pets, not hunting dogs, just as many Siberian Huskies are pets and not sled dogs. How many of these were truly hunting dogs? How many were stolen from a hunter? Ms. Star also states that half of these hounds have heartworms. Is this incidence higher than that of all the other dogs that enter her facility?

In my office, I see dogs of all classes; pets, service dogs, hounds, and pure bred dogs. The standard of care is wide and varied, as is the level of what I consider neglect. Some of the best care I observe is seen with hunters and their dogs. I see more hounds on monthly deworming and heartworm prevention than I do with their "pet" counterparts. Hunters get the best performance from dogs that are healthy and appropriately fed. It only makes sense that hounds should receive good nutrition and veterinary care, as it results in the most optimum physical condition. Lack of obesity should not be misconstrued as starvation and neglect. If that were so then marathon runners' trainers would be charged with abuse. In actuality, they are much healthier than the general population, although they may not look like it at the end of 26 miles.

I would encourage better animal husbandry practices across the board in all sectors. This goal can be achieved through education and peer pressure. Abandonment is illegal and detestable. This type of activity is illegal and violators should be prosecuted. We all have the responsibility to report cases of abuse and

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## Letters (continued from Page 5)

neglect for investigation.

Most hunters not only care for their dogs, they care of the environment and the game they pursue. The club I hunt with spends many thousands of dollars each year on game patches, habitat, and our dogs. We are not unique. We try to work with our neighbors and respect each other's rights. We support local charities, bring meat to those in need, we give to Hunters for the Hungry, raise money for Relay for Life, have fundraisers for cancer patients, and we support the Patrick Henry Boys and Girls home. We also happen to serve on the fire department and rescue squad. We are doctors, lawyers, judges, farmers, servicemen, preachers and teachers. We are your neighbors and we are Virginians.

I am a strong proponent of animal welfare and I believe with animal ownership comes responsibility. Cases of true neglect should be reported and dealt with appropriately whether the guilty party is a hunter or not. The solution is enforcing animal welfare laws already in place, not creating new legislation.

Bryan Morris, DVM

The second letter, from a Dinwiddie Farmer, is equally helpful and it was printed in the Richmond Times Dispatch.

## **Hunting's Critics Distort the Facts**

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

Regarding the Commentary section pro/con debate on deer hunting with dogs:

Country folk step life's dance to old harmonies, and the music of hunting hounds is a part of our song. To those who move into our communities and straightaway set about to criticize our way of life and try to bend us to their will — to those who would remake or destroy our customs before you understand them — why came you among us? We are not quaint; our ways are practical responses to our surroundings.

We hunt deer with dogs because we've learned that's the only way to roust deer from our cut-overs and swamps. Deer damage our crops, threaten our livelihoods, and menace our travel. So, dog hunting, which some may see as archaic blood sport, we see as vital. There is no "Bambi."

Don't confuse dog hunting with "road hunting," a practice which needs to be addressed. Robin Starr has misrepresented dog hunting in order to advance her animal-rights agenda. Her sappy, emotional column was fact-light. Kirby Burche's fact-and-figure-supported column was concise and accurate. The only

## Letters (continued from Page 6)

salient pro-dog-hunting point he missed was that deer hounds will run coyotes, an introduced species increasingly problematic to livestock farmers like me.

Starr seethes and stews over her doubtful recital of the abiding cruelty of hunters to their hounds. But who is the dog's best friend, hunter or humane society/PETA? The animal rights crowd has destroyed many times more dogs over the past 50 years than all of the deer hunting clubs combined. And, no, they weren't "put to sleep."

Harold Conover.  
Carson, VA

# **The Future of Hunting with Hounds in Virginia Depends on November Elections**

The future of Hound Hunting in Virginia will be determined by the November elections. The success of the Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance has been remarkable for an organization that has only existed for less than two years. It has been a vindication of the VHDA Board's decision to concentrate on the legislature rather than oppose the hound study solely with DGIF. The reasoning was simple. The old saying, "The Governor proposes, but the legislature disposes", is as true today as it was in the past. The legislature controls the budget and the laws that govern State agencies. The Governor appoints and can fire all eleven members of the DGIF Board. To change policy you must change Governors and then replace the Board members. Currently, only one member of the DGIF Board hunts with hounds.

As the only organization that has taken a stand against the Hound Study from the beginning, we have confronted the DGIF Board about its misstatements and disinformation concerning the number and type of complaints it was receiving about Hunting with Hounds. We challenged them on statements about the cost of their ill-advised and wasteful study. We constantly kept Virginia's Houndsmen informed of the involvement and interest of the Animal Rights Radicals. We have prepared our own study to tell the full truth about Hunting with Hounds in Virginia and expose the distortions mentioned above, but we knew that our best and strongest defense was to get you to contact your friends in the legislature.

All 100 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates (Virginia State Senate seats are not up until 2011) are up for grabs in the November election, which will also give you a chance to elect a Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General. The success that we have enjoyed this year means that every elected official is paying close attention to his or her voters and will listen to you.

We will shortly announce our endorsement of Statewide Candidates and House of Delegate candidates and post

## Letters (continued from Page 6)

them on our web site. If you want a Department of Game and Inland Fisheries that will promote and defend your heritage and traditions, you will have to get involved in this election! We will endorse only those that have stood by us; those who promise to be there for us must prove it first! We have plenty of friends in the legislature and running for statewide office that we will support.

The Board of Directors of the Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance, at its December 13<sup>th</sup> Leadership meeting, voted to endorse the candidacy of Lt. Governor Bill Bolling ( [www.billbolling.com](http://www.billbolling.com) ) for re-election. Bill has been a true friend and supporter of your outdoor sporting traditions and heritage for many years. At the same time the decision was made to endorse State Senator Ken T. Cuccinelli, II ( [www.cuccinelli.com](http://www.cuccinelli.com) ) of Fairfax. Ken has been a strong advocate of gun rights and is on the Humane Society's Enemies list! Both of these men have been strong effective leaders on behalf of Virginia's Sportsmen. We urge you to attend the Republican meeting in your area and become a delegate to the Republican State Convention in Richmond on May 28th. It costs you nothing and it tells your local elected members of the Legislature that you are serious about your Heritage!

**Please Go to Page 12 for a letter to Virginia Sportsmen that we just received from Attorney General Bob McDonnell! Share it with your friends.**

## Contact a Candidate and be a Delegate or Work in a Campaign

If you want to protect your Heritage, if you don't want to play defense, become active as a campaign volunteer for your local delegate. All Delegates are running for re-election this November. You can make even more difference by becoming a delegate to the Republican State Convention at the end of May or you can get involved in the campaign of one of the three Democrat candidates for Governor and vote in the June 9th Democratic primary.

It is very easy to get involved, just a small commitment of your time will give you a chance to meet and have the ear of your elected officials. Republicans are electing their Delegates in February and March. Click <http://www.rpv.org/publications/page/2009-state-convention> here to see how easy it is to become a Delegate and have a serious voice in defense of your Heritage! There are no fees associated with becoming a delegate. You can contact the campaign of any candidate or party and volunteer. If you need assistance on how to volunteer, contact us at [info@vahda.org](mailto:info@vahda.org)

## National Gun Control Efforts

The November Presidential election has sparked the interest of gun control advocates in gun registration, gun taxing and other serious impediments to your Second Amendment Rights. We urge you to contact U.S. Senators Webb and Warner and your Congressman and ask them politely to oppose any and all restrictions of your Right To Keep And Bear Arms. If you don't belong to the NRA or other Gun Rights organization, you need to join today. While the VHDA Board recognizes the urgency of this issue, we believe that we must concentrate on hunting dog issues at the state level and leave the national fight to the National organizations.

## **Hanover County Puts Limit on Number of Dogs**

The Hanover County Board of Supervisors enacted a limit of 50-dogs that a kennel can keep. This act took place at their January meeting. Only one hunter spoke against this limit. He said he had 53 dogs. He was told he would have to get rid of three dogs before the ordinance took effect on July 1!

This is exactly why we have been urging Houndsmen to organize County by County. It takes very little effort to form a county chapter but will pay big results if you have to respond to a local ordinance with only a few weeks to organize. VHDA has Chapters in Pittsylvania, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Lunenburg, Charles City, Dinwiddie and Cumberland. To form a county chapter of the VHDA contact Matt Bolton at Phone: (434) 454-6903 Email: [amb3@meckcom.net](mailto:amb3@meckcom.net) . Or email [info@vahda.org](mailto:info@vahda.org) .

## **Grayson County Passes Resolution**

The Grayson County Board of Supervisors passed the “Brunswick Resolution” to become the 25<sup>th</sup> county to pass our resolution. Two other Counties have passed a resolutions in support of hunting with hounds with significantly different wording. We are thankful that Grayson County has joined in support of our efforts.

## **Dog License Fees**

How much do you pay for your county kennel tag? A kennel tag is only supposed to cost \$50.00. They may charge you a lesser amount for a block of 20 or 30 dogs, but the greatest amount authorized is \$50.00. The Code of Virginia at § 3.2-6528 (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+3.2-6524> ) established a cap on individual dog licenses and kennel fees. Don't pay more. We opposed increased fees in the legislature this year, currently the localities are not authorized more. A number of counties are charging more than the maximum fee of \$50.00 for a 50 dog kennel permit. No mention is made of charging more for more than 50 dogs in the Code.

If you have been charged more, request a refund today! Remember the Founding Fathers knew “**The Power to Tax is the Power to Destroy**”!

## **VHDA Reward for Abandoned Dogs - \$250**

The Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance is offering a reward of \$250.00 for the arrest and conviction in Virginia of anyone convicted of dumping (abandoning) a hunting dog. The Animal Rights groups condemn Houndsmen for two issues. Knowing the support that hunting has among the general public they attempt to portray all Houndsmen as Neanderthals that abandon or mistreat their dogs. We believe that any honest Veterinarian will tell you that some take better care of their animals than others, but that on balance hunters take far better care of their dogs than does the average pet owner. We can win this argument as long as we respond to their false attacks and police our own ranks.

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## VHDA Initiatives (continued from Page 6)

The issue of dog abandonment is an easy one to mislead the uninformed general public. The animal welfare groups and even many hunters tell stories of hunting dogs that are simply turned loose at the end of the season. We believe that most of these stories are simply urban legends. Most Houndsmen know two important facts: that it is a misdemeanor to abandon a companion animal and that unwanted dogs can be taken to the pound with no questions asked. Any person convicted of a violation of this section of the code (§ 33.1-346) shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by confinement in jail for not more than 12 months and a fine of not less than \$250 or more than \$2,500, either or both.

The Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance believes that the overwhelming majority of “abandoned” hunting dogs are stolen dogs being dumped by criminals or hunting breeds that in fact are not hunting dogs and have stayed from their owners. Regardless of the cause, the Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance is offering a reward of \$250.00 for the arrest and conviction in Virginia of anyone convicted of dumping (abandoning) a hunting dog. Anyone wishing to make a claim may contact us at [info@vahda.org](mailto:info@vahda.org). This is not meant for individuals who did not properly dispose of a dog carcass. Watch to see if your local newspaper will report our effort.

## **Missing Virginia Dog Database and the VHDA Incident Report**

Reports of missing and stolen hunting dogs continue to mount across Virginia. As this is being written we have received another report from Louisa County about collars being removed and the inaction of local authorities and Conservation Police Officers! After much discussion among the Board members, we have decided to take to steps that we believe will help the Hound Hunting public.

First we have created an incident report that you can submit to us to track the frequency and location of these reports. We will use the information to discern patterns that might reveal a theft ring or Animal Rights Radicals at work. The information will also be helpful over a period of time in detecting lax law enforcement. The report is available here and on our web site at [www.vahda.org](http://www.vahda.org).

The second step will be the creation of a website to report your hunting dogs missing in Virginia. We are in the early stages of development, but it should be up and running by the end of April. The site would enable you to put the information about your missing dog and up to two pictures of each dog on the site. We would then notify Animal Shelters, possibly statewide, about the animal.

This is important because they are only required to keep your dog for five days before they can kill it. This is an expensive undertaking, but we believe it is a service that you need and want. It also says volumes about our commitment to the dogs we love. As always your donations are needed and appreciated.

## Fund Raisers/Events

### Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> - EASTER'S OPEN FIELD TRIAL

Derby and All Age 5 HR HGA Hunt - LOUIS CALLAHAN—MASTER OF HOUNDS at Easters Hunt Club, Stoney Cross Rd. Chase City. Portions of proceeds to benefit the Mecklenburg County Hunting Dog Alliance. \$20 per hound For numbers call Jason Mull (434)210-1228 For Info/Directions – Timmy Bohannon (434)210-1161

### Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup> - Brunswick Stew

The Reedy Creek Hunt Club in Brunswick County is cooking a Brunswick Stew that will be ready on March 7<sup>th</sup>, to benefit the Hunting Dog Alliance. If you are in the area, going to one of the nearby fox pens for the day or just love good stew like we do, stop by and buy some delicious stew for \$5.00 a quart. To reserve your stew contact Jason Powell at [Jpowell@jny.com](mailto:Jpowell@jny.com) or [adjpowell@aol.com](mailto:adjpowell@aol.com).

### Friday & Saturday, March 13-14<sup>th</sup> -UEVHDA Annual Hunt

The Annual hunt is held at Poole's Training Preserve [www.poolesfoxpen.com](http://www.poolesfoxpen.com) features a Pig picking Friday night, good food available. For more information or numbers contact Bryan Morris ( [corbanvet@pure.net](mailto:corbanvet@pure.net) ) or Theresa Dunaway ([rrdltree@kerrlake.com](mailto:rrdltree@kerrlake.com)). Additional information will be available at [www.vahda.org/events](http://www.vahda.org/events) as soon as we receive it.

## 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. Are these the items that you want? Let us know at [info@vahda.org](mailto:info@vahda.org). You can have your hunt club name or county chapter added to any hat or shirt.

## DEER POSTER/PUBLIC SAFETY 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.

If any of you have a similar picture for bear, we would like very much to have a copy to create a poster that would be very impressive. Thankfully we don't have to deal with Moose.

Statistics don't tell the tragedy of a loss suffered. The sister of one of our members, Joanne Alger, from Charlotte County hit a deer at the end of hunting season and is in the hospital in a deep comma. She has grown two children. Please pray for her and her family.

Here is a candidate for Governor of Virginia that recognizes the importance of your Outdoor Sporting traditions and the Heritage that we chose to defend!



February 10, 2009

Dear Friends:

As a member of our sportsmen community, I am writing to ensure that you understand Bob McDonnell's recent actions aimed at eliminating animal fighting for sport in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

After evaluating Virginia's animal fighting laws following Michael Vick's conviction, Attorney General McDonnell decided that changes in the laws were needed, particularly because of its ties to gambling and illegal drug use.

In 2008, he worked with members of the General Assembly, Virginia's law enforcement community, animal welfare groups, sportsmen's clubs and private citizens to strengthen animal fighting laws and reduce the criminal conduct that surrounds such activity.

In that effort, his office met with and heard the concerns of those who were opposed to ensure that no legal conduct was unintentionally captured by the proposed law. Many concerns were addressed during the legislative process as a result of that input.

It is our belief that a common sense solution was reached that provides the tools necessary for law enforcement to prevent animal fighting for sport as well as other offenses such as gambling, drug distribution, underage drinking and contributing to the delinquency of a minor associated with such activity.

Bob McDonnell remains a strong supporter of animal welfare and sportsmen's rights and he believes in preserving these rights for future Virginians. When asked recently about his stand on hunting rights, he said, *"As Governor, I will continue to stand up for the rights of all hunters. I believe that we must vigilantly defend this tradition by upholding the rights of all law abiding citizens to own a firearm, hunt with dogs, and to leave to future generations pristine areas to hunt and fish. Hunters understand firsthand that these rights must be protected, and while I support animal welfare, I am opposed to animal rights and will remain committed to sportsmen's rights to hunt with dogs. I pledge to preserve the proud heritage of all Virginia's sportsmen and to ensure that we continue to pass on all of our hunting traditions."*

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at (804) 612-9111 or [PCox@BobMcDonnell.com](mailto:PCox@BobMcDonnell.com).

Sincerely,

Phil Cox  
Campaign Manager  
*McDonnell for Governor*

## **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 we didn't need your help.

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.*

*We pray for the safe victorious return of our troops.*

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