



THE FLAT-COAT FILES



A Quarterly Newsletter of the Northeast Flat-Coated Retriever Club

Summer 2014

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President's Message

The NEFCRC is hosting some fun events that are coming right up!

1. A Flat-coated Retriever Fun Day for all ages and abilities on September 14. See page 11 and flyer insert for details.
2. A FCRSA sponsored WC/X at West Thompson on October 4th. See page 12 and premium for details.
3. The Supported Entry is going to be the weekend before Thanksgiving this year. Please enter or just come. Bring a friend who's interested in seeing a gaggle, herd, pack or passel of Flat-coats. Save November 22nd in West Springfield, MA.

Do you have a story that's unwritten inside of you and yearning to be published? How did you discover this breed? What attracted you to the Peter Pan of Retrievers? Has your FCR ever eaten something she shouldn't? Is he a "counter surfer?" How about socks? Why do you think that FCRs prefer socks?

This newsletter is yours. I like to read about the brags, but beyond the brags and postings we'd love to hear from any and all of you. Thank you, **Lori Nevins**, for writing an article about **Jim Greene** (see page 4), **Jill Kuchinos** for her Versatile Retriever article on pages 7 & 8, and to all who contributed to this Summer issue.

Under the heading of "small world:" **Sally Bridges** says that I have cousins all over the country. She's right. One of them recognized a FCR in NC. In less than 30 seconds she and **Gay Coffin** came up with our name! What's your small world FCR story? Send all writings and ruminations to the newsletter editor, Ruth Sumner.

This is a club of wonderful humans connected through the love of a fabulously funny and fun breed. Hope to see everyone at the coming events.

Sally Young

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Newsletter Advertising Rates:

Quarter-page or litter announcement \$5.00
Half-page (no photo) \$10.00
Full-page with photo \$25.00

Calendar of Events

SummerFall Fun Day Sept. 14, 2014 Gardner Fish
and Gun Club

NEFCRC WC/WCX Oct. 4, 2014 West Thompson Dam

Supported Entry Nov. 22, 2014 West Springfield, MA

Web Site

Check out our website (NEFCRC.org) for results, forms, events, and photos. Webmaster Kristen Sobanski can be contacted at percussion98@juno.com

Address Changes

Please direct all address, e-mail, and phone changes to **Don Bierer** at bierer@comcast.net or (508) 653-0028.

Deadline for submissions for Fall issue is Nov. 25th

Please send newsletter submissions to:

E-mail address: rusummer@mac.com

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Member Story – Tillie Page Laird



Hi!

My name is "Fleetwing's Fiona Fair" but known to all as "McKenzie" or even better, "Kenzie".

I was born on St. Patrick's Day, 2010 and my parents, Tillie Page Laird & Hunter Brown, adopted me in June from breeder Kathy Howland in Nova Scotia. We have come to several events and may have met you.

Tillie Page Laird and Kenzie are a recent therapy team with the Good Dog Foundation which places teams in hospitals, libraries, assisted living locations, and special schools. We visit Connecticut Junior Republic, a nearby day and boarding school for teenage boys who have learning and/or behavior problems. We spend an hour on Friday mornings interacting with boys selected by the Director of Education. Kenzie is so popular that every boy she meets wants her to be "his" dog. It is hard to keep to the 1 hour limit which is necessary as the visit is stressful. I provide transportation and go along for the ride! I bring an extra leash so the boy can "walk" her - he is on her left and I am on her right, controlling her.

She is the joy of our lives and makes passersby smile when we're on our walks. She also swims like a fish and when only 10 months old, followed a vanilla extract "trail" from our house, down the driveway, across the road through the snow and cow manure to the barns and found the bumper I had put in a snowbank - it took 5 minutes with me on a 30 foot lead trying to keep up!

Tillie (and Kenzie)



Member Tribute by Lori Nevins

Jim Greene: A Friend of Flat-Coats and a Friend of Ours



Over a decade ago, our club lost a good friend. Jim Greene was a wise, funny, good-hearted guy. A true New England Sportsman, he greatly enjoyed fishing and bird shooting and spending time with his dogs. He died while duck hunting with his Flat-Coated Retriever Tigger in the autumn of 2003. Inspired by Jim's love of our breed and bird hunting, the Greene family generously set up the NEFCRC Jim Greene Memorial Fund to benefit field training and events.

Each year the Club accepts donations to the fund from the Greene family, Jim's friends, and club members. In return, we need only work our dogs, try to forge the kind of bond cemented by such work, the kind of bond that Jim had with Ti and Tigger. In doing so, we appreciate Jim's special spirit.

It is truly a pleasure for me to tell you a bit about Jim. His first Flat-Coat was Ti, a very nice dog from Pat Carlson. Jim and Ti enjoyed many bird seasons and competed well in AKC and NAHRA tests. I first met them at the 1999 Specialty Unsteady Singles. I was marshaling, rebirding, wrangling up dogs that wouldn't come, shooting for one of the marks, and near-on expiring in the humidity. Jim came to line in his orange vest-- no white shirts in the field for him-- Ti killed those marks, delivered handily, and Jim offered much-needed help working the stake. That was Jim, always solid dog work, and always a smiling offer to assist. Jim worked every event he ever attended, didn't expect accolades for it, and was simply a stand-up fellow. I never met anyone who wasn't pleased to see Jim.

If you have ever attended a club field event or training session, you and your dog have benefited from the Jim Greene Fund. Jim's family and friends created the fund because it pleased Jim so to work the dogs in field. We honor and remember Jim by working our dogs.

Jim is greatly missed by those of us fortunate to have known him. He was a fine man and a fine match for our breed. His legacy is a continuing boon to our dogs and our club. Jim was, and is, a friend of Flat-Coats and Flat-Coat folks. We are most grateful to Jim for his friendship and to his family for their continued generosity.

Member Brags

Don Bierer

The Bierer Boys had a big week at the Big E in August.
Rudy took Best of Breed 3 days in a row plus a Group 4!
Cody earned his 1st point with a Winners Dog!!

The reward was our first time together at the beach. They loved it!!!



Gay Coffin announced some of Lulu's (SHR Kistryl Takes A Lickin' CD BN RA JH SHU WC) accomplishments in our spring newsletter but is happy to add to the list. Bringing her special pleasure is that the Gay/Lulu team earned two senior passes. Also added to the list are the four Master Upland Hunter passes that Lulu earned working with Tim Pullian. It's been a busy summer!



Lulu working hard for those senior legs!

In Memory

CH Artic Sun's Wingover Cool Dan SH WCX October 4, 2003 to July 7, 2014



We had to let Dan go late in the afternoon of July 7th. Cancer had won the battle, but Dan's spirit did not want to give up. The vet was beside himself as he so wanted to make it easy for Dan and us. Finally, his spirit understood and knew it was time to go ...

A short while later, our daughter emailed a photo she had just taken of a gorgeous rainbow fully arcing across the early evening sky. She did not know Dan was no longer with us; we had yet to tell anyone. Fanciful as it may sound, we felt comforted imagining Dan *joyfully* bounding across that rainbow "bridge", once again a younger, healthy and athletic dog in his prime.

Our *wonderful, sweet* Danny-Boy, Our Big Guy, our Da-a-a-n; he was such a grand dog, with a big Flat-Coat personality and even more joie de vivre. How he adored hearing his name; at the sound of it, his tail would swish madly! Dan gave us so much: unconditional love, endless doses of Flat-Coat humor, and loyalty. We, in turn, gave him our all, too. He wanted so much to stay.

Dan was Deb's "learner" dog, teaching her the ins-and-outs of the show ring and of field work. Along the way, he became her "heart" dog. Dan was Bob's exceptional pheasant dog, a natural flusher who brought his distinctive elegance, skill, and joy to the hunt.

To us, and our family, Dan was everything a Flat-Coat should be. We loved him so very much; we miss him even more.

Deb and Bob Westcot

Summer 2014

Member Article – Jill Kuchinos

The Versatile Retriever

*“The Flat-Coated Retriever is a **versatile** family companion hunting retriever with a happy and active demeanor, intelligent expression, and clean lines...” (AKC Breed Standard)*

*“**ver-sa-tile** /'vərsətl/ adjective; able to adapt or be adapted to many different functions or activities.
synonyms: adaptable, flexible, all-around, multifaceted, multitalented, resourceful; adjustable, multipurpose, all-purpose, handy”
(Dictionary.com)*



Versatility is one of the many things we all love about our breed; it is so important to the Flatcoated Retriever that it is first word used to describe our breed. In addition to being easy to live with, fun-loving, and, yes, sometimes silly, we all know they are great pets and dedicated family members.

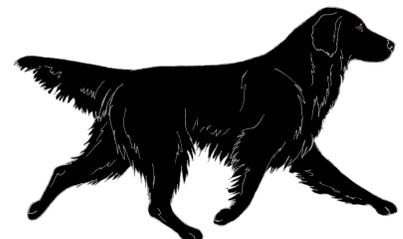
Versatility is one of the many gifts of our breed and that carries into just about any performance discipline. When I see flatcoats working in their area of passion, it is like art to me. It doesn't matter if it is a young pup retrieving a wing, a top show dog in the breed ring, or a well-versed dog working in the utility ring. I've seen the joy of flatties in fun, unique activities from dock diving to team dancing and so much more.

Like most flatties, our boy King loves play, and enjoy life. To keep him busy conformation ring, obedience ring, rally each area, he has been eager to please and year, I realize that, while he enjoys all of these, there aren't enough hours in the day for us to do it all. Since I've been in the breed, I have met lots of other flatties and their people who have really perfected what they're doing because they made a choice, committed to a specific discipline, and have trained, competed, and really made what they're doing an art. I have deep respect for these folks, especially when they've used positive training that leads their dog to success while still showing some flatcoat flair.



every opportunity to swim, retrieve, hike, this past year, we have been in the ring and at a few field training days. In a much quicker learner than I. Over this

Over time, I've thought that our breed's blessing of versatility might also be considered a complicating factor. While other breeds have separate genetic lines that are specifically bred for different performance disciplines, we have the rare resource of dogs who can do anything (perhaps with the exceptions of earth dog events or herding). By owning a flattie, we have chosen versatility and the opportunity it offers. However, I think our versatility (maybe combined with our more limited breed numbers) has formed a quiet competition between disciplines. Versatility is a true gift of our breed – one that allows us to celebrate anyone who chooses to positively train and challenge their Flattie, and one that also shares a genuine appreciation when someone has invested their time, talent and money to represent our breed in the discipline that they choose whether it is our discipline of choice or not.



Summer 2014



As for me, I'm loving this incredible journey with our breed; it constantly challenges my skills and keeps my Flatties busy and thinking. Regardless of what anyone says, I'm going to keep enjoying different disciplines while focusing our training in specific areas to see what we can accomplish. I'd like to master it all, but I'm convinced that there aren't enough hours in the day (or dollars in my bank account) for that. So, I'm thinking that the only way to keep the versatility of our breed is to continue to cross disciplines with healthy respect for what each of us is pursuing.

Hope to see you out there having fun with your Flattie somewhere! and staying involved while feeling supported and encouraged by the rest of us.

Jill Kuchinos

A Related Story — Patricia Temple



I was at the dog show (recent cluster at West Springfield 8/20 – 2/24), first time in an age and a half. I was actually pretty happy with Luke, he seemed to pretty much remember what to do. He was certainly rough around the edges with no practice and no classes, but not embarrassing either! So after the flats were done (congrats to Don & Rudy), we were all standing around chit-chatting and Jill looks down and say, "Oh my, those ears!" I said I do the best I can, but fear to do too much. So, Jill comes over to my set-up, and starts working, commenting that we'll get him in shape for tomorrow. She does the left side (show side) and walks me through doing the other side, showing me how I can do things in optional ways depending on the dog and showing off assets. But, all agreed (Don Bierer watched through most of the grooming lesson) that Luke has A LOT OF COAT, even if it's deceiving because it lays so flat. I can't thank Jill enough for sharing her considerable knowledge and experience with me!

More on Grooming Ears!

Getting Started with Grooming Ears

Kate Barton

This article is designed with the novice in mind, as ears can be very intimidating when it comes to grooming – every cut counts, meaning everyone will see the end results of your trimming. I hope to aid you in some good results that you will be proud to say you did the grooming yourself! The ideas in this article are from watching, asking questions, applying, experimenting, etc. This is not “expert advice”!

A lot of what you will do will be by trial and error, so don't expect to start out perfect the first time, and don't be surprised if you make a big goof your 1000th time! Each dog's ears are slightly different, and/or you may be going for a different “look”.

Tools Needed: You will need some good thinning/blending shears. The more teeth, the less “choppy” it will look. I prefer the type with a straight edge on one side, and 45 “teeth” on the other side. These give a much smoother look than my shears which are straight on one side and only have 30 teeth, or the pair I have which has teeth on both sides.

You may also want a “Magnet” stripper knife, which pulls the dead or fuzzy hair off the ears. Done properly, the dog doesn't object to it at all, even though you're ripping the hair off their ears! (Could also use a stripping “stone”.)



Figure 1

Step 1: Comb the hair down on the dog's ear, toward the long/back part of the flap. (See Fig. 1).

Step 2: Pull the combed ear away from the dog and take your thinning shears and trim tightly around that bottom flap (Fig. 2).



Figure 2

Step 3: Now trim the end in a rounded or squared off design (Fig. 3)



Figure 3

Step 4: Re-comb the hair as you did in step 1, and repeat steps 2 & 3 as needed, until it has a trim, smooth appearance.

The AKC standard mentions the ears in a couple of different places, and says they should be “relatively small, well set on, lying close to the side of the head and thickly feathered...” Also, “When the dog is in full coat the ears ... are thickly feathered without being bushy, stringy or silky.” (Bold-faced print author's emphasis.)

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Kate Barton



Figure 4

Step 5: Now it's time to get rid of the excess hair under the ear flap. While holding the ear up, trim the extra hair off on the inside flap and under where the flap covers, using your thinning shears (Fig. 4)



Figure 5



Figure 6

Step 6: It is time to trim off or strip off the bushiness, while still leaving adequate hair on the ear. One method of doing this, is to comb the hair upward (opposite of Step 1), then use the thinning shears in an upward orientation to trim some of the hair off (Fig. 5 & 6).

Be careful not to trim too much off!

When using the Magnet Stripping knife (fine tooth), be sure to grasp the ear firmly very close to the head before you start pulling the dead/extra hair off. Also make sure you do not "rake" the ear flap – your goal is to simply strip off the hair, not use it as a comb (which would leave lots of scabs and bald spots!)

Your finished product should look something like Figure 7, below.



Figure 7



A couple more things about thinning shears ... do not go across the hair – always go with or directly against the lay of the hair. You are wanting this to look natural, not butchered.

Some people use regular shears (2 straight edges) to shape the outside of the ear. I have personally found this method to be very unforgiving – remember the "every cut counts" I mentioned earlier? Using straight shears accentuates this, and often gives an unnatural appearance.

Remember, each ear is different! If the earset is too high or the ears too large, for instance, you may want to take more off the top part of the ear, so the excess feathering doesn't add to that appearance. If too low or too small, leave more on! If the ears have curly hair, you may need to thin more off so that it doesn't always stick out every which-way.

Good luck, and happy trimming!

Photographs © Cheryl Ertelt

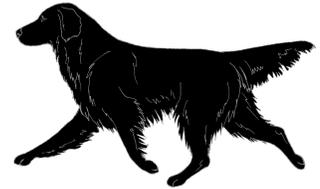
Summer/Fall Fun Day



Some think summer is ending, others think fall is beginning. Some say 'ī-thər, others say 'ē-thər. 'Either' way, please join us with your Flat-Coats and friends on **Sunday, September 14th** at the Gardner Fish and Gun Club, 528 Clark Street, Gardner, MA for a Summer/Fall Fun Day.

Events will include a demonstration of a **Canine Good Citizen** test and an opportunity to practice some of the exercises. Learn what your dog needs to practice before entering the “real thing.”

Get great tips on how to show your dog in the breed ring. Theresa Kuchinos will hold a **mini-handling clinic** for kids and adults. Theresa is a wonderful handler and we can all learn from her expertise.



Practice training your dog to **retrieve on land and water!** We will provide bumpers and long-lines, or you can bring your own. This activity will not be off leash. Help and encouragement will be provided.



We will also have a “**Scurry**” to determine who is the Fastest Flat-Coat. It is a lot of fun to watch your dog run. It is even more fun to watch the frantic antics of the other handlers. Everyone will be cheered on! The fastest retriever will win a beautiful ribbon and half the pot! Second and third fastest dogs will be rewarded too.

Bring your own lunch, and a beverage or dessert to share.

Please bring a crate for your dogs to relax in between activities. There is a large pavilion that will provide plenty of shade. Don't forget plenty of water for your dogs. No flexi leads during group activities please.

Also, no dogs are allowed in the building and, as always, please pick up after your dogs so we will be welcomed back to this site for future events.

No rain date. Cancellation information will be on the website. Or call Sally Young at 802-324-3292.



Have fun with your flat-coats!

Field News and the WC/WCX Test (Oct. 4, 2014)

Another successful field training summer has come to an end. Even the weather cooperated! Buck Shope's property in Templeton, MA provided varied terrain and excellent water for us to train our flatcoats. Our offer of two free sessions for newbies brought several first-timers and their FCRs to field training. It was so nice to see so many members participating. Special thanks go to Bunny, Becky, Sally and Priscilla. The club is so fortunate that they are willing to share their experience, talent and time.

We are now gearing up for the WC/WCX on October 4, 2014 at West Thompson Dam. It promises to be a great day of flatcoat-lover camaraderie topped off by a free barbecue and raffle. Discounted early entries close Sept. 22, 2014 but we accept late as well as same day entries before start time (8:00 a.m.), so come and watch or try the test. Pass or fail, your dog will love it.

We are also encouraging our many golden retriever friends to enter our test. It is a real treat to watch all the dogs retrieving as they were bred to do.

There is a premium at the end of this newsletter or you can get one at www.nefcrc.org under "calendar" by pressing the WC/WCX Entry Form tag. Advance entries should be mailed to the WC/WCX Hunt Test Secretary, Ruth Sumner, 146 Cow Hill Rd., Clinton, CT 06413 — email: rusumner@mac.com



Some happy 2013 Qualifiers



“Dan”
CH Artic Sun’s Wingover Cool Dan SH WCX
October 4, 2003 - July 7, 2014
Histiocytic Sarcoma

You CAN Make a Difference!

If you have a dog with cancer,
please consider participating in our cancer studies.

Contact the **Cancer Studies Support Team** at:

FCR-Cancer-Support@yahoogroups.com

Or contact any Team member directly:

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