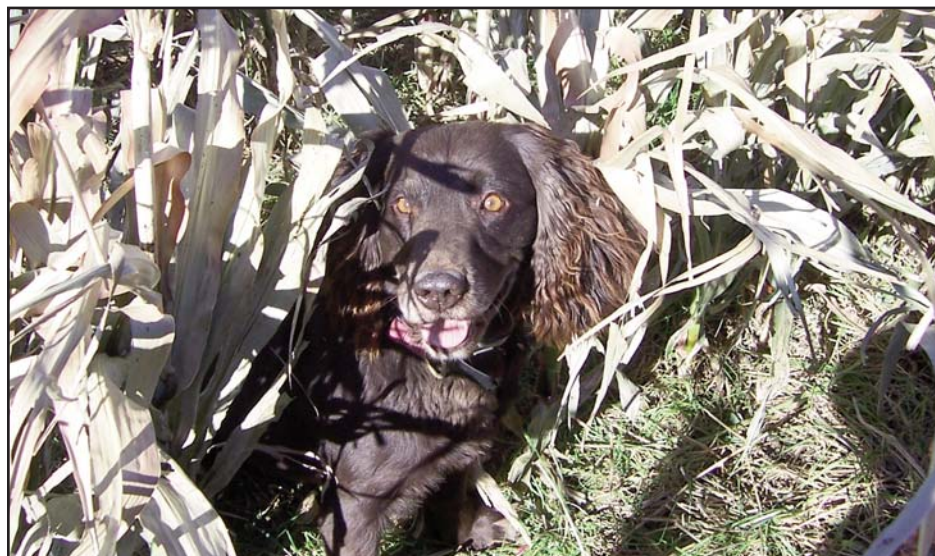


The Pheasant Hunt

by: Hal Roemer



Our 'annual' pheasant hunt this year in Linn, Kansas was timed to take advantage of the opening week in November, 2007. Our party, usually made up of up to 4 or 5 hunting parties this year consisted of 4 individuals: Pat Watts and her significant other half Gary, myself and my wife Carla., and of course plenty of Boykin Spaniels.

"The Kansas trip" is something we save up and plan for the entire year. The Linn / Clay Center area has a beauty all it's own. On my first trip up there from East Texas, I guess I expected to see flat fields of wheat as far as the eye could see. But those rolling hills and creeks made it hard to keep my eye on the road.

Brad Olde, owner of the "Big O" ranch in Linn, Kansas has always guided a fantastic hunt, and this year was no different. He put us on birds every day, working fields that by now we are starting to know from years past.

The weather as always presented some challenges, but gave us perfect temperatures for dog work, being in the high 20's to low 30's in the morning, warming to the 40's and 50's around noon.

The 'challenges' were about a 30 mph wind the first day that had the potential to keep the birds on the ground. But the dogs did their job and got a limit up for each of us. Fortunately there was some adequate

shooting, that was able to make the dog's work pay off.

There's always one or two stories from every hunt, and this one was no different. On that first day, a bird got up and I hit him hard with what looked like a pretty good shot. In that 30 mph wind, the bird drifted down wind about 20 or 30 yards, landing in a winter wheat field. The dogs, being in the milo, did not see the bird go down. Of course the bird turned out to be a cripple, and after hitting the ground got up and started walking. We got the dogs out of the cover and pointed in the right direction, but soon as the bird saw the dogs, it got low and started scooting toward the milo across the wheat. Three of us started running toward the bird, trying to get the dogs to spot the bird. But, three grown men running across an open field just seemed to be a whole lot of fun for the dogs, so they just romped around us as if to say 'yeah! Lets play!'.

The bird being down wind, there was of course, no chance of the dogs picking up a scent, and the bird was getting so far away I could just barely see it. So I ran faster. And I kept running, surrounded by bounding, playing dogs. At some point I noticed that I was running alone. I'd run enough by now that I was out of breath and not able to shout commands to the dogs, so I tried to run faster. I was in a vicious cycle: I'd run so far I wasn't giving up, even though I

knew I'd exceeded any reasonable effort to get one crippled bird.

By now the bird was getting close to the next milo field, where in my pea brain I figured it could disappear. The dogs and I were still easily 60 yards up wind of the thing, when I remembered through my blood pounding haze that my dog 'Hollow Creek's Bear' keys off the direction of my gun when we jump wood ducks in the creek back home. So I pulled up, and fired a shot toward the bird, knowing full well that at 60 yards there was no chance of hitting it. I held the gun pointed at the bird after the shot for what seemed like an awfully long time. In the corner of my eye I could see the dogs had all stopped. Then I saw a brown blur streak toward the pheasant, and I collapsed in a heap. Happy 50th birthday to me!

One other 'memorable' incident was a pretty lively battle between two dominant male Boykins: Bear and Santee, that we were trying to hunt with together, by keeping them separated on opposite sides of the field(s). Well they found each other, and that lead to a fight that was a bit more than a comparison of equipment. It was quickly broken up, but got every one's attention.

We hunted for 3 days, which is what we've agreed is the right length for a good hunt, even though it always seems like too short. We've done 5 days, and that seemed like too long; better to leave wanting more than being tired of it. Each of us went home with our ice chests full, and the dogs happy..

The drive doesn't seem to get any shorter, and the gas for sure isn't getting any cheaper but it's a once a year trip, and I don't want to look back in years to come and think "I could have....." Carla got to see what I love about Kansas, and why I love the hunt: good friends, good company, good dogs, plentiful birds, and fantastic scenery. I'm already saving up for next year, and hoping I can shoot straight enough to keep from embarrassing myself.

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Pheasant Pot Pie Recipe

- Cooked pheasant meat
- 2 Cans cream of chicken soup
- 1 can of Veg-all mixed vegetables
- 1 TB soy sauce
- 1 can mushrooms celery salt to taste

Season one pheasant with Lawry's seasoned salt and some garlic salt.
Place 2 cups of chicken broth in Crock Pot. Add a bay leaf and sliced onion.
Cook pheasant in crock pot for 8-10 hours.

Mix together all ingredients and pour into deep dish pie crust.
Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.