



HWA Update

Summer, 2020

*This digital newsletter goes out only by email to save \$\$.
Feel free to read it, print it, share it, or (sigh) delete it.*

Welcome to Our No-Nationals Newsletter!

HWA's summer digital newsletter usually comes out in June, in time to be full of news about the upcoming Nationals in September. Unfortunately, HWA's Board and event planners had to make the hard decision to cancel this year's Nationals. Uncertainly about the fluctuation of Covid-19 and risks of inter-state travel and mingling were concerns for all of us. Throw in an anticipated smaller-than-usual entry, and having a shadow of an event wasn't feasible or worthwhile. So, HWA's Nationals cancellation is added to that of so many other events during these long, crazy months of 2020.

But we plan to keep going and make the best of things. HWA's Board has agreed that we will have our **Annual Meeting** in September, but it will be a teleconference meeting, most likely combined with our September Board meeting on a weekday evening. We'll offer members an opportunity to join that meeting when we get closer to it.

We usually kick off our **Membership Drive** for the coming year at the Nationals, so we'll start out 2021 Membership Drive in September by sending new membership renewal/sign up forms out to our email list and website.

Someone suggested having a Zoom Banquet since we can't be together for our Nationals' Banquet. As yet we haven't had much chance to discuss if there's an appetite for that, but we welcomed the suggestion. If you have suggestions for things to make this club better, feel free to let us know by emailing HWAinformation@gmail.com

And join us in hoping the next year will bring resumed normal life and events for everyone.

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Airedale Advice: Keep Going

Since the start of the pandemic, thousands of words have been written about to cope. As we haven't seen any interviews with Airedales yet, we thought we take a look at how some Airedale owners and their dogs are spending their time.

Airedales and owners that were **field training** before the pandemic are gradually returning to training, either in individual sessions with a trainer, or in small groups working together. Even
(continued on page 2, right column)

Who Ya Gonna Turn To? Facebook!

Say what you will about Facebook, but since the start of HWA's Facebook page in November 2010, Facebook has served Hunting Working Airedales well as a way to communicate with Airedale owners who share an interest in Airedales in the field. HWA's Facebook page currently has 3,398 followers. The majority (2,223) are in the US. Canada (145 followers), the UK (143) and Germany (107) lead the internationals.

Facebook gives us a chance to share Airedale adventures and achievements and to ask questions. HWA's most Frequently Asked Question is: **Where do I get an Airedale puppy from working lines?** Our answer is always that a good starting point is HWA's Breeder Referral page on our website: <https://www.huntingworkingairedales.com/breeder-referral> A second step would be to refer to our website's Links/Resources section (<https://www.huntingworkingairedales.com/links-resources>) to look up the article in the right side column on "How Do I Find a Good Airedale Hunting Pup."

Another recent Facebook question was: **"I have a 3 month old Airedale pup. How would I go about testing/training her for bird dog work?"** That's a big topic, but again, our website's Links/Resources section is a good reference source with articles on "How Do I Start Training My Hunting Airedale" and "How Do I Find a Local Bird Dog Trainer."

Another recent Facebook query was **"Any tips on how to desensitize my two year old Airedale to the sound of a gun?"** Since there's a lot of online information on this topic, the answer to the question was in two parts, as follows: This is a topic lots of pros have weighed in on, so a good first step is simply Googling "gun shy dog training." If your dog is not yet gun shy, and you want to prevent him becoming gun shy, there's some good advice in this article posted by Gun Dog Supply: <https://www.gundogsupply.com/sws-gun-shy.html>

Or if your dog is already gun shy, as a starting point have a look at an article posted by a professional trainer, such as the one posted on
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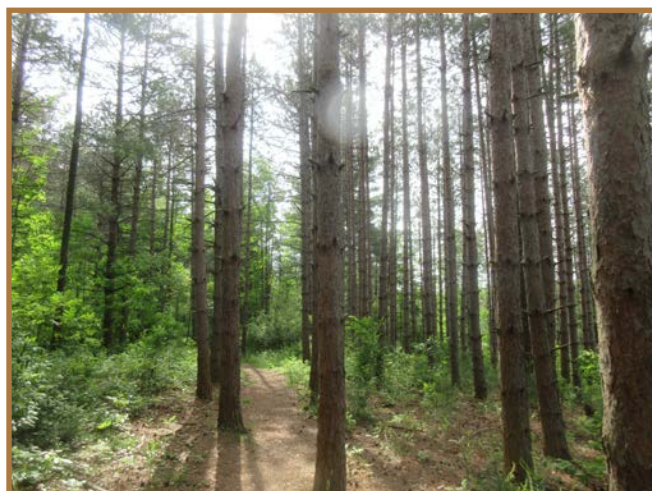
(Keep Going, cont'd from page 1)

though many hunt tests and seminars have been cancelled, as far as the dogs are concerned, training is a fun goal in itself. Sometimes the journey is more fun than the arrival.

It's a hot summer, so **water work** is a good alternative to getting over-heated in the field. Introducing a puppy to swimming works best when the owner is wading into the water with the pup, so that's a cool-off bonus for the owner. Even throwing bumpers for water retrievers or practicing water blinds can be refreshing for the owner when the dog gives that big shake after he delivers his bumper.

With the easing of stay-at-home rules in some states, some **obedience classes** have resumed. Whether or not you're into field work, Airedales need to learn basic obedience concepts such as sit, stay, come, and NO. As one trainer noted: "Without obedience, you'll have a loose cannon ..."
Experienced owners may well home-school their dogs on basic manners, but formal obedience classes give Airedales an important chance for social interaction and working with distractions.

Airedales have always been great companions for **hiking and camping**, activities that are even more popular in this time of social distancing. If you're heading out for some wilderness hiking, you may share the concern of an HWA member from Colorado who asked about experiences other HWA members have had with snake-aversion training (also called snaking-proofing) Airedales. That question led to the **"Watch Out for That Snake!"** feature on pages 5-9 of this newsletter.



Social distancing at its best.

(Facebook, cont'd from page 3)

Willowcreekkennels.net titled "How to Cure a Gun Shy Dog." See <https://www.willowcreekkennels.net/learning-center>

Another recent Facebook question shows Airedales are the same all over the world: "I have a 12 month old Airedale in NSW Australia. She's great dog apart from when she's in hunt mode she will not listen or obey any command. Is this a common thing with the breed? And what are some suggestions to help with this issue? We live on a farm and soon as we are near a rabbit hole she's off and once she starts she's long gone by the time she comes back."



The answer: Airedales with high prey drive, like most dogs, would rather chase critters than come when called. Most field dog trainers use e-collars as long-distance "leashes" to reinforce the Come command and prevent dogs from chasing off-game. E-collar training follows some standard procedures, so if you don't have a pro to teach you the how to use it, you can look up numerous good videos by Googling "e-collar conditioning."

In addition to asking questions and giving Thumbs Up "likes," HWA's Facebook page gives Airedale owners from all over the country and the world the chance to share photos and videos of their Airedale's exploits. We share some of them on this page with you.

Here's a sample of photos posted by visitors to HWA's Facebook page.



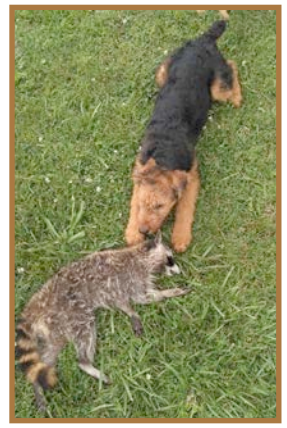
Hog hunting in southeastern US



Goose in Saskatchewan



Coyote lure in Ohio



Raccoon in N. Carolina

Pheasant in California



Grouse in northwestern US



Ducks in Wisconsin



Rabbit in New Zealand



1st water retrieve in WA



Boar hunting in Hungary

Appreciation to the ATCA Newsletter

“I didn’t join the ATCA because I heard its mostly for conformation people,” a friend recently said. Maybe its time to rethink that.

The Airedale Terrier Club of America [ATCA] has been our breed’s parent club since its founding in 1900. Its efforts to expand beyond a concentration on conformation events to be more interesting to the wider world of Airedale owners is shown by a quick look through the most recent edition of the their quarterly newsletter, *The American Airedale*.

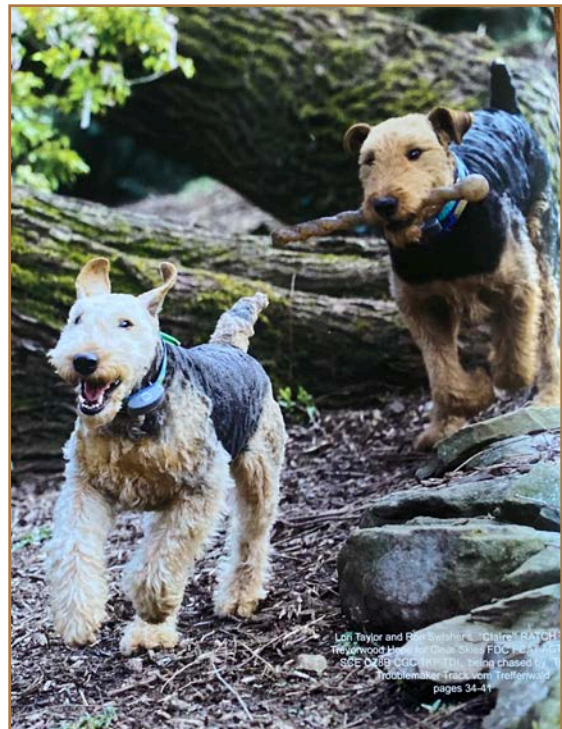
The newsletter cover and feature article showcases the first Airedale to earn an AKC Champion Tracker title as well as high honors in several versatile performance venues. In addition, there’s:

- Four pages of coverage of the ATCA’s Hunting and Field Committee at the huge Pheasant Fest convention.
- HWA member Dale Burrier has an excellent article on hand-stripping Airedales, complete with photos of various stripping knives. It’s not just for show dogs.
- There’s a page on the AKC’s Family Dog program, which is aimed at folks who want to be active with their dogs without extensive obedience classes.
- An interview with HWA member Lori Taylor on activities to do with your Airedale to keep busy during these difficult times
- An episode in the continuing series of adventures/observations of companion Airedale Sabrina Grace and her family
- A write-up/promo of the plans for the All-Terrier Obedience trials coming up at the end of September (unfortunately now cancelled).
- A comprehensive write-up of the week of planned events surrounding the Airedale Specialty weekend at Montgomery County Kennel Club, including All-Terrier Agility trials, obedience and rally trials, barn hunt and lure coursing. (now all cancelled)
- And yes, two reports with photos of Airedale competition and winners at recent conformation dog shows.

So if you haven’t been paying much attention to the ATCA, now might be a good time to check out their website at www.airedale.org If you become a member, you’ll have access to the online version of their newsletter. However, members must pay an \$18 fee if they request a printed copy. For those of us old-fashioned enough to prefer paper, its worth it.

Get-Acquainted Offer:

According to the ATCA website, *The American Airedale* newsletter is also available to non-members for an annual subscription rate of \$18. To subscribe send check or money order (payable in US funds only) with your name, mailing address, and e-mail address to The American Airedale, Circulation Dept., 9762-230th Street E, Lakeville, MN 55044.



The back cover of the current ATCA newsletter is a great photo by Lori Taylor of playtime for her Claire and her husband Ron Swisher’s Track.

If you do not wish to stay connected through our HWA email mailing list, please contact HWApres@gmail.com to ask to be removed.

Watch Out for That Snake!

Some Cautionary Notes for Airedales

“When I heard the odd buzzing noise, time seemed to slow down. Suddenly the prairie rattlesnake came into sharp focus 4 feet in front of me as it coiled holding its rattle prominently in the air. My flight-or-fight response kicked-in without any active thought on my part, and I was backing up as quickly as I could. My next actual thought was ‘Where is the dog?’ and I was relieved to see him 75 feet away, apparently never having seen nor smelled the snake. Shiloh, my 4-year old Search and Rescue-certified Airedale Terrier, and I were running a search training exercise in an open meadow of the Cibola National Forest. Although I had seen a number of rattlesnakes in the open deserts, foothills of the mountains, and meadows of New Mexico, this was truly my first close encounter.”

HWA member **Mary Walker** wrote the above when asked about snake encounters in the course of her SAR work. Mary had recently shared a video of her young Airedale practicing a Search and Rescue find on our HWA Facebook page. The action taking place in dry southwestern landscape coincided with a question from Mitchell Stewart, another HWA member, who plans to do a lot of hiking in Colorado with his young Airedale this summer.

“What do other Airedale people do about snake proofing their dogs?” he asked. He was reluctant to let his dog hike off-leash until he could plan for its safety. Mary Walker agreed to share her experiences doing SAR work in snake country.

“ I am a member of the wilderness search and rescue team, Sandia Search Dogs, based in Albuquerque, NM,” Mary continued. “We routinely conduct searches with our dogs in the desert and mountain environments of the state where there are seven native rattlesnake species and one venomous coral snake. As a precaution each year all dogs on the team are ‘snake-proofed.’ We work with a very experienced snake handler/dog trainer, JJ Belcher who runs Sublime Canine, Tucson, AZ, and who conducts a rattlesnake avoidance workshop for our team in late spring each year. I am no expert in this training, but briefly here is a description of what is done. JJ uses an electronic collar on the dog as he allows the dog to see, hear, and approach a rattlesnake. As the dog approaches and shows

interest, JJ gives the dog a brief shock with the intent of instilling in the dog that it was just bitten by that snake! The timing is critical, and so JJ is the only one to administer the shock. In addition to seeing and hearing the rattlesnake, it is critical that the dog associate this avoidance with the smell of the snake. The dog is permitted to smell the area where the snake had been, and then JJ lets the dog smell the skins shed from a large number of rattlesnakes. After the dog takes a good long sniff (2-3 seconds) of those skins, it gets another shock.



Mary Walker's Airedale Shiloh gets a snake-aversion lesson.

“Although I am unaware that any of my SAR K9s (all Airedale Terriers) have encountered a rattlesnake in the field, it may be because they have kept their distance when detecting the odor. Just to be certain, each year I have JJ Belcher re-check my dog's avoidance to his rattlesnakes and provide any supplementary training, if needed. So far none has been needed. Each dog has remembered the odor and has no interest in getting ‘bitten’ again! “

HWA Board member **Cindy Green** has had to make venomous snake awareness part of her daily life due to her living circumstances. Cindy agreed to share some of her snake experience. She writes:

“I live on wooded property in South Carolina where we have copperheads, rattler, and cottonmouths . All my Airedales over the years have learned to be very snake savvy. My two current Airedales will give a clear snake alert such that I trust walking in the woods with them. The snake alert is very distinct - they freeze at

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(Snake! Cont'd from page 5)

first, then give an intense alarm bark with a growl. It's very different from the excited bark, tail wagging and movement when encountering a rabbit or bird, or the bark they give when running a deer. It is not trained by me. But I know that dogs that spend a lot of time out and about are very savvy about all creatures and teach each other.

"I have received some timely warnings over the years that have saved me from stepping on or reaching into a snake. I have trained an 'out' which is like a generic "LEAVE IT!" This is my preference, but if I am not present they often tag team kill the snake.

"I have had many snake encounters over the years and dealt with dogs being bitten on several occasions. Often the dog fortunately receives a false bite as a warning. Snakes do often give a false bite to conserve venom. It is termed a 'dry bite,' and they are able to apply teeth without injecting, which is secondary. I understand this behavior evolved so that snakes can discourage creatures that may be after them and conserve precious venom until absolutely needed. Just my experience and the word of long time locals - first bite is often dry, and second bite is real thing.

"The real thing generally results in immediate swelling. I keep liquid Benadryl on hand for these emergencies and have a dosage chart. A dog the size of an Airedale can generally manage the venom from a bite providing you immediately keep the swelling from restricting their airway (and usually the bite is to the muzzle because Airedales are being terriers and getting at it).

"Even with quick administration of Benadryl it is still good to get antibiotic treatment for the bite if large area impacted. I also keep this on hand. We have been years without after hours emergency vet care in this area, so we have had to be practiced and prepared.

"And having been through this multiple times in the last 30 plus year with dogs on this property I do have a pretty good feel for when dog is going to be ok. I've only made one late night journey to get emergency care with two Airedales that took multiple bites. Only one bite was venomous and right on nasal passage way.

"I only recently learned about the availability of snake-aversion clinics in this area. This person

and clinic came highly recommended by a trainer friend, and the method used was one I had read about. They use live copperhead and rattlesnakes in a screened cage for the training, and then proof with a vigorous, non-poisonous uncaged snake. An e-collar is used for the aversive. The correction level matches the intensity of the dog and is intended to be a memorable 'hell no' correction.

"I attended the snake aversion training during this pandemic season. They changed the format such that there was not a group gathering nor a group question period. Each person was assigned a time slot, you waited in your car until your time and then returned as soon as your session was complete. All communication and questions were handled via email.

"About 40 dogs/handlers were signed up the day we attended. Most were some type of working dog such as Retrievers and Setters. Also in attendance was a search and rescue team with their Bloodhounds.

"I took my 9 month old Teckle pup (wire-haired Dachshund specifically selected for hunting and tracking). She would not be able to survive a venomous bite at just under 20lbs. She has quite a bit of prey drive. We are training her for tracking wounded game. so she works in heavy brush. She made a couple of goes at the snakes until the correction was such that she ran off, laid in the grass and would not look back. Not fun to watch really, but she ate her treat as soon as we returned to the truck so she readily moved on from the experience.



Cindy Green's Teckle pup, Giddy, of whom Cindy says, "If there were auditions for the part of Miniature Airedale, the Teckle would surely get the part."

"I will say that now that I am aware of good snake aversion training options I will do this with any future Airedale pups."

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(Snakes, cont'd from page 6)

HWA member **Michael Sites** had a harrowing experience when his Airedale Kira came upon a nest of snakes while hiking. Michael agreed to share his experience:

“On November 24, 2017, the day after Thanksgiving, my wife Elise and I took our 7-year-old Kira (Aircraft Kira Stella Sites, MH, MHV, MFT, GD, CGC) and our 9-month-old Reeva (Stillwaters Reeva Mia, SH, SHV, SFT) hiking in southern Missouri.

“We like to hike and did so at every opportunity. Generally, we allowed both dogs to run alongside us and explore. We always kept a close eye on them so they would not wander too far off. It was Reeva’s first time running freely. She kept at Kira’s side and followed her lead.

“It was a warm day in the 40’s after several days of freezing temperatures. The trail was generally rocky, paralleled the St. Francis River, and crossed a couple of small trail access parking lots. We hiked about 3 miles up river and turned around to walk back to our car. About 2 miles from our car, I noticed that the trail up ahead turned up hill and narrowed with large rocks on both sides. Both Kira and Reeva were walking in the woods parallel to us about 10 feet downhill. I called the ‘girls’ to come up to us on the trail so they did not get trapped down hill. Both dogs leaped up onto the trail when called.

*Kira immediately started screaming.
She was terrified, shrieking in pain.
I have never heard such a sound in my life.*

“Kira immediately started screaming. She was terrified, shrieking in pain. I have never heard such a sound in my life. Her shrieking got higher pitched, louder and more intense. She was favoring her left front leg and biting at it. As Elise held Reeva, I managed to restrain Kira and look at her leg. I knew it was snakebite. Bloody fur and severe pain. We never saw the snake(s).

“I took some gauze roll bandage and tied it around her leg, above the bleeding area to restrict, but not stop blood flow (we always carry a first aid kit when hiking away from home). We

had passed a trail access area a hundred or so yards back. I tried to pick up Kira, but her 64-pound weight, the rocky, uneven narrow trail and her writhing was too much. I could not carry her.

“I took off my shirt, made a sling and placed it under her front legs. I supported her front end while she walked on her hind legs all the time screaming in pain. We made it to the trail access parking area. Elise lay down in the grass trying to comfort Kira. It looked like Kira was fading fast. We were both terrified. Elise made sure Kira stayed awake as she kept closing her eyes. I ran the 2 miles back to our car. I speedily drove back to Elise, Kira and Reeva. By this time Kira was weak and her leg, covered in blood, was still bleeding profusely.

“We put Reeva and Kira into their crates. We iced (from our cooler) Kira’s leg for a few minutes and quickly drove to a veterinarian’s office we had seen earlier that morning. A note on the office door gave the name of a doctor on call during the holiday. We called the number and left a message. We waited. Nothing. Nothing forever. We didn’t even get a return call until 3 days later. After waiting a few minutes, I Googled for another veterinarian. There was a number for a DVM in a little town 10 minutes away. I called and she answered.

“When we arrived, they were ready for us. I carried Kira in and layed her on the examination table 75 minutes after the snakebite. Kira was in severe pain and still bleeding profusely. The doctor shaved and cleaned Kira’s leg while I held her still. There were 6 snakebites on her left front leg below the elbow. She had stepped into a pit of snakes. It all happened in 1 or 2 seconds as she jumped.

“The doctor administered an antihistamine, antibiotics and a steroid. She said that copperhead snakes were common in the area we were hiking in. That certainly was not in the trail guide. She said that we were lucky the bites were not rattlesnakes or water moccasins as these would most likely have been fatal.

“The doctor gave us a series of antibiotics and instructions for soaking Kira’s leg a minimum of 3 - 4 times a day for 20 minutes in an Epsom salts solution. This would keep the wound clean and help ease the pain. She warned us that Kira
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(Snake, cont'd from page 6)

would be sore for many days, we should keep activity to a minimum and that most likely some skin would turn black, die and slough off. We drove home, thankful for an experienced DVM being available during a holiday weekend. The next morning we took Kira to our local veterinarian. He inspected Kira and agreed with the treatment plan.

“Epson salts soaking 3 to 4 times a day for 20 minutes became a daily routine. At first Kira fought it because she was very sore. After a couple of days the pain eased somewhat, and she accepted the treatment. This soaking time also ensured that we continued to inspect her wounds for infection.

“After a week or so the skin between her toes turned black, died and began to slough off. It was slowly replaced with fresh, soft, pink skin. We had our veterinarian check Kira when her skin started to necrose. He said this was normal, there was no infection and healing was proceeding as expected. Kira made a full recovery and we began hunting with her just before New Years, 5 weeks after the incident.

Comments:

- Even though the air temperature was typically too cool for snakes to be out, they may have been warming themselves on the sun warmed rocky ledge alongside the trail.
- We never saw any snakes.
- It happened impossibly fast without warning.
- Any outdoor activity with your dog carries risk. Have access to a first aid kit and learn how to use it.

Some things we learned:

- Always carry a first aid kit
- Per the DVM, include “fresh” Benadryl in your first aid kit and immediately administer 1 pill to counteract the effects of the venom. Avoid getting bitten by your potentially delirious dog while administering the Benadryl.
- The DVM said using rolled gauze as a constriction band and applying ice was an excellent first aid procedure to slow the spread of the poison.
- The DVM told us that the bleeding was caused by a component of the venom that thins the blood. She claimed this results

in some of the venom exiting the bite as the wound bleeds.

- Airedales are big and heavy. Be prepared to rig some type of carrying system.
- When away from home, know where emergency veterinarian services are available; especially during holidays.
- Hike with a charged cell phone for making emergency calls and navigation.
- If possible, have a cooler with ice in your vehicle.



Michael Sites and Kira at HWA's 2019 Nationals, almost 2 years after her snake bite incident. Kira won the Brown Bess Memorial Award for the highest scoring Airedale in the HWA Upland Test.

Mary Walker's SAR team understands the importance of being well-prepared to deal with snake bites. Mary's team's practices reinforce Michael's experiences. Mary writes:

“In the 10 years that I have been on this SAR team, a SAR K9 has never been bitten by a rattlesnake. Nonetheless, we are always prepared for this possibility. Mary Berry, DVM and founder of the team, recommends the following: Carry the dog out of the field if possible, to decrease their exertion and reduce their heart rate, helping to slow the rate by which the toxin enters the circulation. With this in mind most of us have some kind of rescue harness in our packs to carry the dog out of the field. Additionally, Mary says do not cut the site
(Continued on page 8, left column)

(Snakes, Cont'd from page 8)

of the bite nor suck anything from it, and do not to apply a tourniquet. It is wise to know which veterinary clinics in the training area carry antivenom, so no time is wasted getting the dog to the right place for treatment. Ideally, the antivenom should be given within 4 hours of the bite. Lastly, it is important to note that there is a rattlesnake vaccine, but there is little-to-no information on its effectiveness. This may be, in part, because snake bites vary in the amount of toxin released, and a dog's reaction to a bite will also vary depending on the toxin load, making it difficult to know how much protection the vaccine is providing."

Venomous snakes are found in many parts of the US in a variety of environments. Take the advice of HWA members with snake experience: Watch out for that snake!

Did You Know?

Summaries of **HWA Board Minutes** from our teleconference meetings are posted in the Members section of our website, www.huntingworkingairedales.com So if you're a member who's wondering what's going on inside the club, that's your inside look. If you've forgotten the Member Section password, contact us at hwainformation@gmail.com



We'll be back!