

## From the Publisher's Desk

Welcome to the Dec/Jan issue of Bird Dog & Retriever News. Thank you, subscribers, organizations and advertisers for supporting us.

I hope you all had a great bird season. We have had better, but that is the nature of training and educating the next generation of pups. Ellen and I will continue to take our dogs a field as the winter seasons come to the end and even in the dead of winter as part of our continual training. We hope you do the same. And introduce a kid or a non-hunter to our great sport so they catch the bug too.

So, what do we have in this issue? First I look at a simple thing: collars and what belongs on them. Frank Neumayer looks at different types of shotguns. That way if you are at a banquet you can toss in a few extra tickets to possibly win and try out a 16 or 28-gauge gun or for a grand kid that is coming up. Ellen said at 7 months old it is too early to buy our seven-month-old grandson Jax a gun. But I guarantee just as his dad did never waited for his first Red Ryder he won't. As my dad and Ralphie did.

Other things in this issue: some nice new products, George Hickox talks about getting your dog to hunt in range, we look at holiday dog hazards and our Buy The Book book takes an expert look at Alpha dogs. That and a laugh or two, some industry and state news, calendars, a recipe, some great advertisers stuff, we felt you should know.

So now we all need to stoke the fire and settle in for a the months of rest before the April test season begins our year again.

Enjoy!

See you in the field and at the shows & events!

Dennis Guldan

**Publisher Bird Dog & Retriever News**

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**"I've recently discovered that I can predict the future. You'd think I would've seen that coming"**

## Meet The Breeder

## Bells &amp; Tags &amp; Lights and other things on a collar

By Dennis Guldan

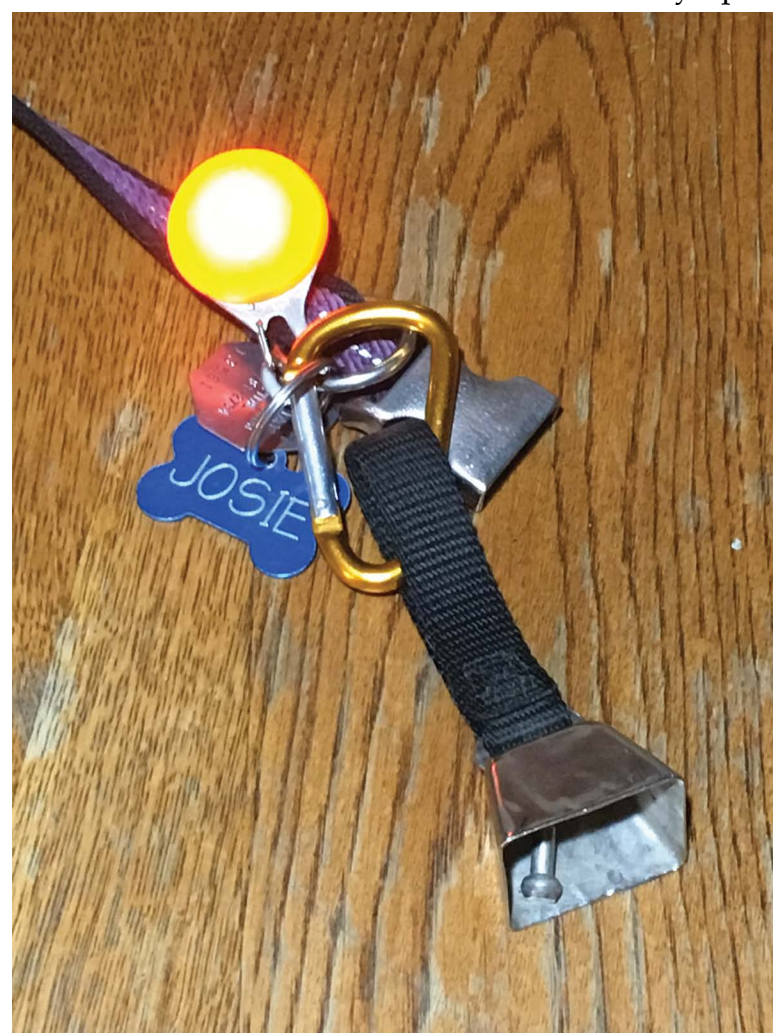
If you hunt with a dog, especially in the grouse woods, you have probably looked for a dog or two. Yet in my early days of hunting I was never a big fan of bells on dogs. Cause you see my job is to sneak up on game and surprise them. That said, if you have ever seen a sunrise in the million acre woods in a deer stand, you know few things go through the woods without making a sound. The least of which are hunters & dogs.

Birds know you are coming, and that is not always bad. Some game animals have the fight or flight genes. Most game birds have flight or hide genes. And beyond that, the first thing game and we do when we hear a sound, is move our heads to see what it is. That movement alone is enough to give us away. And if you disturb them enough for flight, you may get a shot, if they hide, you may walk right past them, IF you don't have a good dog!

A few things changed my mind about bells on dogs. The above discussion about putting a wary bird in the air as they hear you coming. My brother-in-law who can drive a stone's throw on his ATV with a dog running in front and having no issues getting shot-close to game birds. And most importantly looking for a dog as the day breaks to night.

So, a few years ago I broke down and put bells on my dogs. Now I don't go in the woods without them. What I found out is exactly as expected. It seems we walk past less birds. I can in a moment find my

three dogs. And something I found amazingly my DOGS use them to find their brace mates. It's very common to see a dog: pause, listen and go toward the bell.

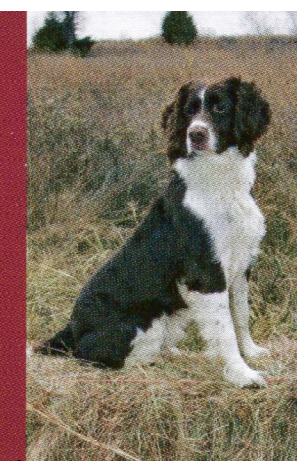


If you are new to bells there are a couple things you should know. First buy several sizes getting different sounds for each of your dogs. It is amazing the slight difference in frequency can let you know in an instant: Sadie is up and to the left, Josie is over to the right and Old dog is behind us.

Second you need to know how to attach bells. We use very small D-rings or a carabiner for those that know

dogs in the woods before sunrise or after sunset they work the same as bells but you can see them not hear them. They come in assorted colors so you'll know what dog they are attached to. AND they come with D-rings attached, which makes them great.

So, if you're looking for your dog in the woods, you can listen for them or look for the moving light, it makes running dogs SO much easier! Have fun!



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what that fancy word means. The bells go on/off quickly and we have never lost one. If you ring a bell around our house our dogs go into hunting mode and head for the truck.

But what else do you put on your dog's collar? Some people put their rabies tags on them. We do sometimes but have lost them that way too. Another must is a current, readable ID tag. We pay about \$15 for them at Petco. My dad used to make them with an engraver now called a Dremel. I always put the

## Shooting

Shotgun Choice  
By Frank Neumayer

The first question to ask yourself when choosing a shotgun is simply, "what do I want to accomplish with my shotgun shooting?" Many shooters want a versatile shotgun for both hunting and target shooting. Others may want a gun just for a specific hunting or target sport. Competitive shooting, on the other hand, can take you off in whole different and expensive direction. So you see, choosing a shotgun is simply making the right choices. The majority of novice or recreational shooters I've encountered want a versatile, all purpose shotgun of good quality and reliability. With that in mind, I don't think you can beat a quality brand 12 gauge pump or auto. Remington, Browning, Beretta, Benelli, Winchester... all make excellent multi-purpose shotguns that will give you many years of good, reliable service and performance.

To be a little more specific, when you choose a multi-purpose shotgun, I would suggest you select a 12 gauge. Everything considered; this is probably the most popular, all-around shotgun gauge in America. Select one with a 28" barrel (min), vent rib, recoil pad, and screw in chokes. This will give you the comfort and versatility you'll want with the one-gun approach. One important thing to remember about the gun you choose, is how readily available are parts and service. Many gunsmiths don't have, or can't easily acquire, spare

parts for off-brand, or lesser known brand shotguns. The key to your gun choice should always be quality and reliability! Be willing to pay a little more for a shotgun you can honestly trust to bag your



limit or to run a trap. In the field or on the range, choosing between an O/U, pump, or auto... I'll choose the auto. For one thing, the pump or auto will give you three shots in the field. It's probably just me; but when having to take that second or third shot in the field (or shooting continental trap, and trap and skeet doubles) I have a

slight problem working a pump and staying focused on the target. Also, the recoil with an auto is considerably less, which makes shooting a lot more comfortable, especially for those shooters (ladies and youth in particular) who have a higher sensitivity to recoil. Autos require a little more cleaning and maintenance to maintain their performance. However, good gun care must become a standard practice for any shooter if you

want to retain your guns value, reliability, and trusted performance each time you take it out. Now, you may be thinking what about an Over & Under (O/U) or break-open shotgun? They are an excellent choice! However, staying with quality and reliability, an O/U will more than double the cost of your shotgun choice. Again,

most of the brands mentioned above offer excellent models of O/U's to choose from that will serve you well. However, I recommend if you're just starting out, stick with a quality pump or auto. There are a number of other high-end, high-quality, competition brands of O/U's available like Perazzi, Kolar, Ljutic, and Krieghoff... but for the novice or recreational shooter these brands are very expensive and far exceed your

basic, multi-purpose, trap and field needs.

If you'd like more information visit my website at [www.claybrakn.com](http://www.claybrakn.com), or if you have a specific question send me an email at [claybrakn@msn.com](mailto:claybrakn@msn.com) and I'll do my best to get it answered.





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