



December 2015

The FLYER

Volume 28 No.2

nevadawaterfowl.org



Winter Edition

Avian Diseases
Planning for Drought
Next Nevada Duck Stamp
Dogs Don't Live Forever

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Photo by Chris Nicolai

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Cover photo by Ernest Ross of Wood Ducks along the Truckee River.

The *FLYER*

The Flyer is the official newsletter publication of the Nevada Waterfowl Association and is published three times per year. Guest articles are welcome. Our classified section is available for advertising.

The articles and views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those shared by the NWA membership, its officers, or Board of Directors.

MISSION STATEMENT

Nevada Waterfowl Association's mission is to protect, restore, and enhance Nevada's wetlands and the wildlife dependant upon them, especially waterfowl and shorebirds. Nevada Waterfowl Association works closely with organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Lahontan Wetlands Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and other conservation organizations that share our goal of preserving Nevada's unique desert wetlands for future generations to enjoy. Nevada Waterfowl Association is a family oriented conservation organization that was created in October 1987 as a 501 ©(3) tax-exempt non-profit corporation by a group of individuals who were alarmed at the rate of loss of Nevada's unique desert wetlands. Nevada Waterfowl Association intends to become a statewide organization through the formation of local chapters throughout the state. Nevada Waterfowl Association is founded upon the principle that all monies raised by the Association in Nevada, will be spent to help Nevada's own wetlands and wetland-dependant wildlife. All donations are tax deductible.

U. S. Postal Service Identification Statement

Nonprofit Organization

Publication Title: The FLYER

Statement of Frequency: 3 Times a Year

Authorized Organization's Name and Address:

Nevada Waterfowl Association
5081 Albuquerque Rd.
Reno, Nevada 89511

Subscription Price:

No Cost to Members

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Willie Molini

Summer is over and our precious desert wetlands are dry. For Nevada waterfowlers it is a disappointing time as western Nevada continues to experience extreme drought. While normally we would be eagerly awaiting the opening of the waterfowl season, since there will be very few places to hunt in western Nevada, such is not the case this year. While waterfowl production is predicted to be fair to good in most of the major duck breeding areas and with continental populations at a high level, the situation is even more disappointing for Nevada duck hunters. The only bright news on the horizon is the prediction of a good possibility of the development of a strong El Nino in the Pacific Ocean this fall and winter. We can only hope that the winter of 2015-16 is a good one that will help fill our marshes next spring. I guess that years such as this will make us appreciate the many good years that we have been blessed with.

Because of this serious situation and longer term concerns about water management in Lahontan Valley, a core group of the Lahontan Valley Wetlands Coalition, including several members of NWA Board, has been meeting to consider ways to improve the use of water for Lahontan Valley wetlands. The focus of this effort is to devise a plan for wetland water management which can be agreed to by the agencies with statutory responsibility for wetland management. The ultimate goal is to have a wetland water management plan that will result in the best possible habitat conditions for wetland dependent wildlife species in whatever water availability scenario we are faced with. There is much work ahead, but hopefully the end result will be well worthwhile.

Well, the legislative session is over and fortunately, there were no really bad bills passed which would negatively impact Nevada sportsmen. The proposed constitutional amendment to essentially make hunting, fishing and trapping a right for Nevada citizens was passed. This proposed amendment must pass the 2017 legislature and then a vote of the people in order to amend the constitution. A bill that was proposed by the Coalition for Nevada Wildlife to establish a media educational campaign about the value of hunting, fishing and trapping and how wildlife management in this country is funded (North American Model) was not enacted. While the bill passed the Senate, the Assembly Natural Resources, Mining and Agriculture Committee refused to hold a hearing and vote on same. Some version of this proposal will likely be put forward in the 2017 session.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Reno dinner committee for the

fine job they did in putting together the Reno dinner in May which raised considerable funds. Likewise, my wholehearted thanks goes to our many sponsors and dinner participants. Without your involvement the necessary work to be done for future wetland protection and enhancement in Nevada could not continue.

May you all have a great winter in whatever endeavor you pursue.

William A. Molini, President



WHAT CAN WE CATCH FROM DUCKS?

by Jeffery Metheny, MD, and Bradford Smith, DVM, Davis, CA Reprinted with permission from CWA

It's a scary world out there at times, especially when we hear an alarm such as "Thousands of ducks killed by cholera in Klamath Basin" or "Flocks of wintering waterfowl succumb to botulism in Central Valley." Add a third-hand story about, say, a couple of duck hunters becoming quite ill after a weekend hunt at a Northern California refuge, and the cause and effect become jumbled, mysterious and concerning.

We learned in junior high school health class that historically there have been epidemics like influenza and plague that ravished human populations across the world, so when we hear horrific diseases are frequenting our marshes and targeting waterfowl, it's unsettling, and we ask whether we are at risk as well.

Clearly there are many well-known zoonotic illnesses – diseases transmitted from animal to man – such as rabies, Lyme disease, and more recently Ebola, but the animals that normally carry these diseases are not ducks. Let's look at some common bacterial, viral and parasitic diseases of wild ducks, see which may be transmissible, and perhaps dispel some misconceptions and calm some fears.

Bacterial diseases such as botulism and cholera can cause die-offs of hundreds to thousands of wild waterfowl. Some wild waterfowl also carry strains of avian influenza new to North America (H5N2 and H5N8), but don't appear to get sick from it. Ducks are also prone to the parasitic but nonfatal *sarcocystis* – known to most hunters as "rice breast."

CHOLERA

Avian cholera is a contagious disease caused by the bacteria *Pasteurella multocida*.



Photo of avian cholera by Idaho Department of Fish and Game



The bacteria are found in infected birds' feces and nasal secretions, and it spreads with bird-to-bird contact and even just splashing around in a contaminated environment.

The bacteria might be a normal part of a duck's gastrointestinal tract. But when they are stressed, virulent strains can invade into the bloodstream, leading to systemic infection and causing unusual behavior, weakness, paralysis and usually death. These are not ducks that will be flying into your decoys. They are simply too weak and ill.

Hunters aren't at high risk for this disease, but human infections have occurred as a result of bites, scratches or respiratory exposure to a large amount of the bacteria – not from eating sick ducks.

BOTULISM

The botulism bacteria, *Clostridium botulinum*, can be part of the normal gut flora in healthy ducks. But when flocks are crowded and the water warms up, these excreted bacteria concentrate in the mud, decomposing vegetation and small invertebrates that live there. Ducks come into contact with the bacteria when they dabble in the mud or eat the vegetation and small water bugs. The bacteria then multiply

massively and create a deadly

***Sarcocystis*, or rice breast, is a parasite which lives in muscle tissue.**

neurotoxin (botulism) that first paralyzes, then kills ducks.

The cycle continues when flies lay eggs on the carcasses of botulism victims. The toxin concentrates in the maggots as they feed on the carcass. Ducks sicken when they eat the maggots. Eating as few as two maggots can be enough to kill a duck.

No human cases of botulism have ever been associated with an outbreak of botulism in wild ducks – our food botulism cases are from a separate, but related, strain. However, in lab experiments, animals fed an uncooked bird that succumbed to botulism have contracted the disease and died. Thorough cooking destroys the toxin.

SARCOCYSTIS

Sarcocystis rileyi is a parasite that affects dabbling ducks and some of the nonhuman carnivores that eat them. The carnivores get the parasite from eating infected birds, and birds become infected when they're in water contaminated by the feces of infected carnivores.

Most of the time, infected ducks show no symptoms at all. You'll know an infected bird when you clean it because it looks like its breast meat is filled with grains of rice running parallel to the grain of the muscle, hence the nickname "rice

breast.” The disease actually has nothing to do with rice.

Humans are not hosts for this particular strain of the parasite, and there is no data indicating a human has been harmed by eating infected meat. Some hunters say they routinely eat birds with sarcocystis, properly cooked of course. But you should avoid feeding infected meat to your pets, and no one would blame you if you took a pass on eating it as well.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

The most dangerous waterfowl virus and the one we’ve heard so much about in recent years is called avian influenza or Asian bird flu, or sometimes fowl plague. Caused by the H5N1 strain of a flu virus, its epicenter is in Asia and virulent or highly pathogenic strains can be extremely lethal to domestic poultry.

The problem for humans appears to start when human influenza strains and avian influenza strains mix and trade some of their genes. This allows the highly pathogenic avian strains to acquire the ability to attach to humans and infect them.

The usual yearly flu strains in humans, H1N1 and H3N2, are rarely fatal. Since 2003, the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has become established in domestic ducks in parts of Asia and Africa. Since 2003, more than 700 human H5N1 infec-

tions have been reported, primarily in Asia and Africa. H5N1 was found once in Canada – from a traveler who had recently returned from China.

Unlike our seasonal influenza, avian influenza is not easily passed from human to human; most people who get it work in close contact with poultry. But concern remains that an avian strain coupled with a human strain could create a world-wide medical catastrophe. This happened in the 1918 influenza pandemic due to its highly contagious nature and high mortality.

This winter, the H5N8 strain was found in two wild ducks shot by hunters in Butte County, and H5N2 was found in a pintail in Washington state. Both strains are descendants of the Asian H5N1 virus. Wild ducks do not appear to get sick from the virus, but they can transmit it to domestic birds, especially turkeys, which can die from it. This year, these strains have been found in some domestic flocks in the Pacific, Central, and Mississippi flyways, resulting in quarantines and sometimes the euthanization of flocks.

We know of no reports of human infections in North America from handling ducks; the greatest concern is for domestic poultry flocks.

Though hunters are generally safe from these diseases, there are precautions you can take if you’re concerned:



Birds picked up at botulism and cholera outbreaks are buried (as here) or burned.

- Do not harvest ducks that exhibit weird behavior or that you feel might be sick.
- When cleaning your waterfowl, evaluate the body for general health and wasting. If you notice unusual bleeding, abnormal appearing internal organs, or unusually foul odor, discard the bird in a proper trash receptacle. Don’t leave it out where scavengers or pets might be able to eat it.
- Wear rubber gloves if you have an open hand wound.
- When dressing whole ducks, thoroughly rinse the body cavity with clean water.
- Don’t smoke or chew while cleaning ducks.
- For those who still want absolute safety, cooking meat to a temperature of 165 degrees kills bacteria and inactivates toxins. But unfortunately that tends to result in overcooked duck!

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PREPARING FOR THE DROUGHT

by Jim Giudici

In my article in the last edition of The Flyer I questioned the wisdom of the decision made last year by the Stillwater refuge to take most of their water early in the spring instead of waiting until the cooler weather in the fall. Apparently, my article has ruffled a few feathers based on some of the comments I have received. Frankly, I think that is a good thing. Supporters of the Lahontan Valley marshes better start thinking seriously about how water that has been acquired for the marshes is actually managed. This is especially so as the current drought drags on and drives home the point that there is a difference between water rights on paper and actual wet water. As bad as last year's water condition was for the Lahontan Valley marshes, this year will be even worse.

As I write this, it is late March so final details are yet to be decided. But, based on what I have heard so far, it appears that the Newlands Project might be totally shut down by June first. That will be just before the hottest months when the evaporation rate will be its highest. The annual average evaporation rate in Lahontan Valley is 5 acre feet. That means that whatever marsh habitat can be flooded by the June first date will quickly dry up. The marsh habitat will shrink, concentrating both birds and toxins in the warming water at a time when there will be no source of fresh water to flush out any disease outbreaks.

There is already a report from the Salmon, Idaho area that some 2,000 snow geese have been found dead from avian cholera. That disease comes on quickly, causes convulsions and erratic flight, and can kill birds in midflight. Avian cholera spreads so quickly in infected birds that some with no previous signs of illness can die while in flight and fall out of the sky.

At the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge along the California/Oregon border, the drought is crowding birds onto the Tule Lake area. Incredibly, that Refuge has vested water rights, but I have been informed

that the Bureau of Reclamation has failed to write a contract for delivery of the water to that refuge. Thousands of migratory birds have already died there from avian cholera.

Here in Nevada, an estimated 3,000 migratory birds have also died from avian cholera since early December. There is one report that as many as 10% of the ducks that used Walker Lake last season may have died.

At this time, nobody knows where any of these outbreaks started. But the Walker Lake outbreak likely started when infected ducks or geese flew to the lake and mixed with other birds. The bacterium that causes avian cholera occurs naturally in dirt where it gets picked up by birds. Under the right conditions when drought concentrates birds onto shrinking habitat it can become deadly. Live bacteria is released into the environment from dead or dying birds and can quickly infect healthy birds. Infected birds die within two days but can expire in as little as six hours. This means that the avian cholera that killed the birds found dead at Walker Lake could have come from someplace else.

Could the avian cholera that killed the birds at Walker Lake have come from Lahontan Valley? I don't know. I do know though that there have been avian botulism outbreaks in the past in Lahontan Valley. And botulism can kill just as many birds as cholera, if not more. As the water in the marshes warms up without any source of fresh water, conditions will start to favor an outbreak of botulism. How many birds might die from botulism this year in Lahontan Valley is anybody's guess right now.

Another problem the drought is causing concerns predators. Obviously, as a drought concentrates birds into ever more limited habitat, so too the predators concentrate on those same areas. In order to sustain a population of birds, it requires a nest survival rate of at least 15%. I have been informed that during the last major drought in the 80's some students at UNR conducted a survey of shorebird produc-

tion at Carson Lake. The result of their study showed a 100% nest predation by ravens.

I may offend some people, but Nevada is a large state and there is plenty of room for ravens other than the limited marsh areas where we are trying to save and restore migratory birds such as ducks and shorebirds. I have not worked as long and hard as I have on these problems just to feed shorebird eggs to ravens. Nor do I want to sit and watch outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and botulism turn the Lahontan Valley marshes into death traps for waterfowl and shorebirds.

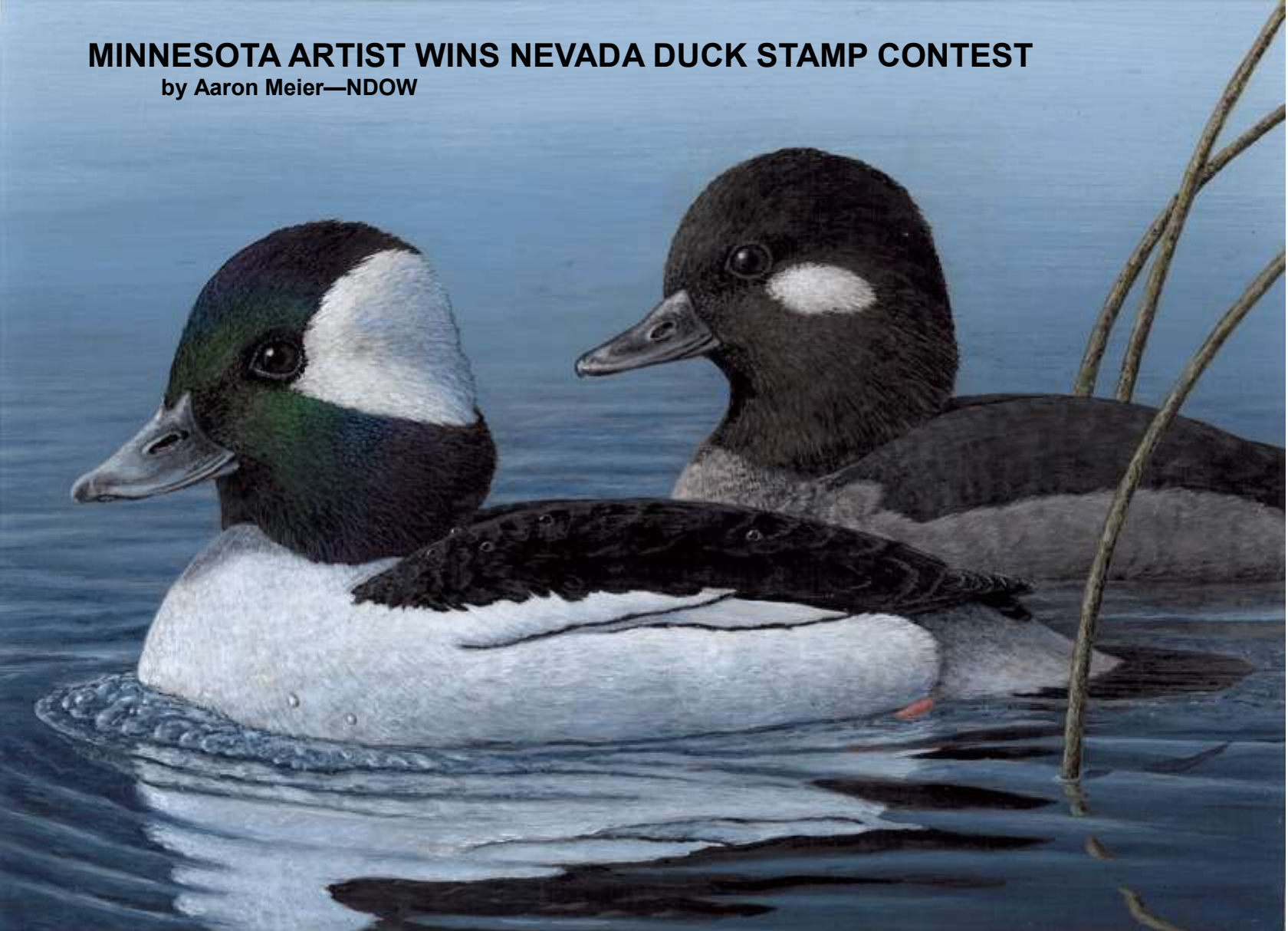
So how should the water that has been acquired for the marshes be used this year? I don't know yet. But one thing I do know is that if all the water has to be taken before the project shuts off on June first and no water can be held back for fall delivery, a lot of birds are likely to die. Under these drastic conditions, it might be better in the long run to forfeit use of the water this year and let the marshes dry out as quickly as possible in order to reduce the risk of the disease outbreaks that are sure to occur if water is delivered early but then shut off on June first.

There is sure to be more information later as this year's process goes forward. I will try to keep my readers informed. One thing people can do if they want to help, is to buy a ticket and attend the NWA event on March 19th and help us raise the money to fight for the marshes.

In the meantime, if you visit any of the Lahontan Valley marshes, please look for any dead or dying birds. If you see any, alert both the state and federal authorities. One key thing to do when there is an outbreak of either cholera or botulism is to remove the dead or dying birds from the water. Dead birds should be burned or buried as quickly as possible. If live birds are treated in time, they can sometimes recover. And most important of all, pray for snow in the mountains and rain in the valleys.

MINNESOTA ARTIST WINS NEVADA DUCK STAMP CONTEST

by Aaron Meier—NDOW



Minnesota wildlife artist Mark A. Thone has done well in the previous art contests he has entered, but after getting close several times and never winning, he was starting to wonder if it was ever going to happen. Well, he can stop wondering because Thone's entry has been selected as the winner of this year's Nevada Duck Stamp Art Contest.

"My first reaction to your announcement of my selection as Nevada Duck Stamp winner was an ear to ear grin," said Thone. "Then I played my poker face told my wife the news...As her face lit up, I admit to doing a little touchdown dance."

While this may be his first win, Thone has a proven track record of success with several of his pieces placing near the top in Minnesota stamp competitions as well as twice finishing in the top 10 in the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest.

The contest was sponsored by the Nevada Waterfowl Association and sanctioned by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). This year there were 17

entries to the contest from 12 states including two entries from Nevada.

The winning entry in the annual art contest was selected by a panel of seven judges including two wildlife commissioners. Thone's painting of a pair of Buffleheads floating on the water will now grace Nevada's 2016-2017 State Duck Stamp.

The subject of this year's contest was the Bufflehead. The name Bufflehead refers to the bird's large bulbous shaped head. This is most noticeable when the male puffs out the feathers on the head, which greatly increases the apparent size. The Bufflehead is actually one of the smaller ducks ranging from 13–16 inches long with the drakes larger than the females. Adult males are striking black and white, with iridescent green and purple heads with a large white patch behind the eye. Females are grey-toned with a smaller white patch behind the eye and a light underside.

"I love the bufflehead, I think of them as the Chickadee of the waterfowl world," said Thone. "The little diver duck can come bombing in to your decoys and

while noted as generally being a very black and white duck in color scheme they can be iridescent in the right sunlight."

The Nevada Duck Stamp sells for \$10 and is required to be purchased by any person who hunts migratory birds in Nevada. Stamps can also be purchased by collectors and the general public to support Nevada's wildlife and habitat conservation efforts. A limited number of prints may also be issued, and are available for fundraising for wildlife-related and other conservation organizations.

DOGS DON'T LIVE FOREVER

by Chris Nicolai

Don't get me wrong, I have always fully understood that all things die, including dogs. Even yellow labs who have been around you since the day they were born. A friend that has always hopped in the truck, waiting there for me at a store, excited to go to the river to go fishing, or the best yet, heading out with the shotgun to go look for birds. I have had 2 other yellow labs, one of which was the mother of this dog named Berni. They both had previously died, quite



Berni and band-tailed pigeon

quickly with no suffering.

This dog was named Berni for



Grace and Emily Nicolai hunting ruffed grouse with their dog friends

the latin name for brant (*Branta bernicla*). She was from a 2006 litter we had while living here in Reno while I was still analyzing data for nesting brant for my graduate work. Many of our friends bought her litter mates. We had our first daughter nine months after Berni was born and our second daughter 27 months after that. The mother of Berni died shortly after our second kid was born. My first dog was my high school, undergraduate, and beginning of graduate school dog. She helped me learn how to hunt, and party. My second dog was my graduate school dog. This dog, Berni, was "the kid dog". She played with these kids, let them dress her like dolls, cleaned their high chairs, and put on some extra pounds by helping to keep the floors clean; and she hunted like a madman.

She would fetch forever. You would get worn out throwing bumpers or frizbees, and there was no day when there were too many birds to fetch. She got to retrieve her namesake bird at one year old. We had a lot of fun fishing, walking nest box to nest box checking on the wood ducks, and we walked tall sage mountains looking for sage grouse. Life was great and continued for a long time and she barely showed much for age, other than getting whiter and maybe sleeping more.

This past August, she was in my truck, along with her daughter from a recent litter. Thoughts of Saskatchewan were on my mind this mid-August day. We happened to be driving right by our vet clinic and figured that maybe we should stop in and make sure we had current rabies certificates for our Canada trip in 6 more weeks. Neither dog had been in since the last round of puppy shots nearly two years prior. Both dogs were current on their rabies shots, but Berni was due for a checkup. The first thing the vet did was feel around for lumps. It was within three seconds that I could tell that he detected something. Ended up being some lumps under her jaw and on the back of her legs. It sucked. The vet knew what this was and told me my dog had lymphoma. It was crushing.

We got home and confirmed his diagnosis online. She was expected to live 20 to 50 days. The final straw I learned, was that they will usually pass by having their lymph nodes under their jaw grow so large that eating becomes difficult and they just quit and need to be put down.

I was mad. Really mad. We were 2 weeks from the opening of bird



Berni with the first retrieve of her last season, an adult male blue grouse

season, September 1. How could this happen right as we were ordering more shells, repairing decoys, staring at maps, etc? I was furious.

It took about 4 days for me to finally realize, yes, I was right. Hunting season is just around the corner. But, it hit me that rather than sulking about it, why not hit it out of the park and send Berni to dog heaven skidding in sideways, covered in marsh mud, feathers, and some bird blood?

So, that was it. The plan was laid. I found out that I needed to do some field work in eastern Nevada on Septem-



Emily Nicolai, 6 years old, with her first ruffed grouse retrieved by Berni in 2015



Grace and Emily Nicolai with their first sage grouse with Berni in 2015 .

ber 1 to look at some retrofitted powerpoles which had been electrocuting eagles. A perfect time out of the office for opening of blue grouse season. We started work early, got done early, and found me and both dogs way up high in limber pines. And we got a gorgeous adult male which Berni flushed, and retrieved. I must have taken 40 pictures thinking this was her last retrieve. Heck, we were 12 days into her diagnosis, she only had 8 more days until the lower prognosis was reached.

A couple of days later was Labor Day weekend. The whole family had plans to go to northern Nevada to look for ruffed grouse with the wall tent. Off we went. Berni got to fetch mourning doves and many ruffed grouse, including retrieving both of my daughters (now 6 and 8 years old) first ruffed grouse. Gobs of photos were taken of Berni with happy girls hugging their dog they have been told would be dying soon.

We received notice that we were awarded a returned doe antelope tag for the next weekend. I'm not a big game hunter, but had been applying for this tag for a few years with hopes to expose my kids to something different. We got that antelope 40 minutes into this weekend's hunt. For some reason, there were a zillion sage grouse randomly flying over us when we shot the antelope, and the flight continued until the antelope was quartered in the cooler. Berni was worn out watching over 300 sage grouse which happened to choose to fly over us that day in their morning flights. We spent the rest of the weekend with the

whole family shooting more ruffed grouse with Berni. The weekend was a blast and we were past day 20.

The next weekend was opener for band-tailed pigeons in California. Me and both daughters try to go every year as we can camp at the hunting spot and have an easy fun trip. We got our pigeons, took a lot of photos, and even bought Berni a hot dog at the outdoor restaurant we chose for lunch. We even went back the next day.

The following weekend was sage grouse opener, and Berni was still chugging along. She flushed and retrieved a lot of sage grouse, including the first sage grouse



Berni eating her first hotdog at a restaurant after a good day of band-tailed pi-

for both daughters.

My wife drove her car for this hunt as my truck was loaded to continue to Saskatchewan immediately from this hunt. We split up after this hunt in central NV. But, it was a tough one. Berni should not be returning from a 2 week trip to SK. Her estimated time was nearing a close. There were a lot of tears from two little girls, and both parents saying goodbye to Berni. Both dogs and I headed off to Logan, UT to pick up a friend who was going to SK for two weeks. Life was grand!

We drove direct the 26 hours to SK. Hunted cranes the first evening, shot geese the first morning, and hunted canvasbacks the second morning. As we were packing up that 2nd morning, my pal got "the call" from his wife who was expecting their first child in five weeks. Yup, we packed fast and I got him to the Saskatoon



Berni with her daughter Molli in Saskatchewan in October 2015. Only time the author had hunted canvasbacks alone in Canada.



The Nicolai family at Cold Bay Alaska

brant in the Pacific Flyway congregate in a mile wide and 20 mile long lagoon before migrating south. Maybe we should just take her? I called Alaska Airlines and it would only add \$100 each way to take her.

Well, she was still rocking it when it was time for the trip. So, off she went on her first airline flight. She retrieved brant for me, my wife, and my 8 year old daughter. These were the first brant for them. She even retrieved some banded brant I had banded many years prior. She was in brant dog heaven! On the last day, we could hunt until noon, before we had to check in at the airport for the way home. Yeah, we all snuck in another hunt, we had to. Sure enough, I dropped my limit of two brant out of a flock and she fetched them both while I took a bunch of photos and everyone else picked up their birds and the decoys. We came home on a Sunday night with great memories, a zillion pictures, a dog with salt water in her fur, and even some brant blood on the fur of her face.

That Wednesday, we had our first snow. Berni started limping and I assumed she just twisted a muscle running through the door on wooden floors happily playing with her daughter.

On Thursday, both rear legs were limping. On Friday morning, she couldn't stand up. I took her to the vet. They did an ultrasound and found that lymph nodes in her rear end were cutting off her arteries and her legs were basically asleep. It was time. But, my 8 year old daughter was adamant that she

airport ASAP. Me and the dogs were on our own for the rest of the trip. I think the dogs were happy when I put both their dog beds on the cot my pal vacated. The next day the dogs and I had top notch canvasback hunting over my 4 dozen handcarved can decoys, and as always a lot of pictures were taken, thinking it was the "last retrieve". But to be honest, that last canvasback hunt was the last time I thought that the rest of the trip. We kept hunting like nothing was wrong. The old dog was retrieving like a champ. She could do no wrong. Her last retrieve in SK was a banded white-fronted goose.

On the 26 hour drive back, there was a couple of hours after midnight where Berni was having some problems. I was very stressed trying to think if there would be any veterinarians willing to put a dog down between Butte and Idaho Falls in the middle of the night. But, a stop at a rest area, letting dogs exercise and eat helped. I think drinking water was key as Berni had been on prednisone now for seven weeks. She was one day from the final day of the prognosis. We made it home just fine where there were two girls excited to see their buddy again.

But now we were in a conundrum. That is, we had a family trip planned to Cold Bay, Alaska since March. This trip was 2 weeks after coming back from SK.

After a week of relaxing at home, I started thinking that she will die before we go, or we cancel the trip. But then, again, it hit me. This is Berni, the dog named after brant. And this trip was to go to where all the



The Nicolai family with the last family hunting trip with Berni

wanted to be there when Berni needed to be sent off to the hunting grounds in the sky. I said I'd be back later as Berni was comfortable spending the day in the back seat of the truck she had spent 1000's of hours in.

That night, Berni was slow, but she was able to swim for ~50 bumpers thrown by two little girls.

On Saturday, 6 days after she was fetching brant 3500 miles away, she couldn't stand up, had no interest in eating fried eggs,



Berni with her first retrieve in 2006 at West Nutgrass at Stillwater

WE COULD USE SOME HELP!!!

Nevada Waterfowl Association would like to extend an invitation to members to submit articles and photographs. We would like to expand the content of *The Flyer* and hope that members would like to submit articles about their hunts, concerns with waterfowl hunting in Nevada, or

nearly any topics associated with desert wetlands and the wildlife which are dependent upon these wetlands. Articles can be from 200 to 1600 words. Please consider sending photographs with submitted articles.

Additionally, we are looking for photos from waterfowl hunts or oth-

er waterfowl oriented activities. Kids of families hunting, kid's first bird, unique birds seen or harvested, or other photographs.

If you'd like to submit materials, please contact Chris Nicolai at chris.a.nicolai@gmail.com

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