



The First Show Issue

Volume 2, Issue 2

October, 2006

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THE AMERICAN SWEDISH VALLHUND SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

All Bark!

Shows Shows Shows!

In this issue, we'll take a look at showing. Whether you're an old hand or just thinking about maybe entering your Vallhund in a show for the very first time for both of you, there's something in here for you! We even have an article on hotel safety, something we can forget all too easily.

Since my Vallhund Rakki is my very first show dog, I really understand how intimidating it can be to consider showing for the first time (and this was just conformation!). I was nervous as could be, I'd heard all the horror stories (my friend who missed her first class because she was so nervous she was in the washroom when her class was called, and then pro-

ceeded to run straight into a pillar in her second class, because she was watching her dog instead of watching where she was going), but surprisingly, it was fun! Sitting around outside the ring talking dogs with people,



**INT NORD FIN S N EST CH NordicW-01
Fennican Jonathan Jovial (“Jonni”),
owned by Outi Huuskonen.**

getting in there and doing your best to show your dog off, learning as we went. I was instantly addicted. I

think all it takes is gritting your teeth and getting out there the first time. There are some great resources for this, so I've included a recommendations section (books, web sites, etc.).

And remember your contributions are always welcome!

Amanda Lowery, Editor
amandalowery

@charter.net

ASVS club officers:
President: Pam Abrath;
Vice-President: Darlene Sjoberg; Secretary: Yvonne Slusser; Membership Secretary: Amanda Lowery;

Treasurer: Marion Erp;
Board Members : Lori Schaunaman, Tilli DeBoor; Web Site Man-

ager: Outi Huuskonen.
Please visit us online at
www.vallhund.net

The ASVS Philosophy

The **American Swedish Vallhund Society** is dedicated to the preservation of the Swedish Vallhund as it was originally intended, in appearance, temperament and working ability. We support owners and breeders who embrace this philosophy, and encourage selective breeding of healthy stock, genetic research and education of the general public. We pro-

mote participation in the many areas where this breed excels.

ASVS: recognized as an official United Kennel Club single breed club September, 2004

For membership information, please contact

Amanda Lowery at:
amandalowery@charter.net

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BRAG Corner!

Earned a new title with your Vallhund? Achieved a goal? Let us know and we'll publish it here!

🏆 Cindy Kingsley's Zorro (UKC, ARBA, **IABCA CH** Fennican Zoltan Finnboy) finished his International All Breed Canine Association Adult Championship

🏆 Outi Huuskonen's Jonni (INT NORD FIN S N EST CH NORDW-01 Fennican Jonathan Jovial) has had some great recent show success (read her article on the next page for details)

🏆 Cindy Kingsley's Aris (BIS ARBA CH Sunfire's Perfect Harmony **OA NAJ**) finished her AKC Open Agility and Novice Agility Jumper titles, handled by Mary Carter.

🏆 Cindy Kingsley and Zorro were featured on Animal Planet's Eukanuba Tournament of Champions Houston dog show broadcast (to be rebroadcast October 5th). Vallhunds are now in the AKC Miscellaneous Group, on their way to full AKC recognition and their proper place in the Herding Group

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



CAN & UKC CH Konnunkodon Brynhilde, owned by Darlene Sjoberg

MY FIRST DOG SHOW by Marg Dickinson

When I got my first Vall, Scamp, from Nicky Gascoigne (Rosern Kennel in the UK) he was bought as a pet for our 3 yr old daughter Laura as we'd had to get her beloved Great Dane/Lab cross put to sleep and she was fretting and crying for him every day. When Scamp was about 6-7 months old I took him to the obedience class run by Nicky and her husband. After a few weeks she asked me if I'd show him, and he was duly entered in the SV society's show. I hadn't a clue what showing was about, and Nicky didn't tell me anything about what to do - maybe she assumed that I knew.

So we entered him in the puppy dog class, and duly turned up at the show - with Scamp wearing a wide red leather collar with silver studs that I'd found over the field during a walk, and on a thick plaited rope lead! There were 3 dogs in his class, so I made sure I stood at the end so that I could watch what to do, cos by that time I was

rather bemused by what was happening. Scamp thought it was wonderful to see so many of his own kind and his bum didn't stop wagging! The judge was Liz Cartledge whose husband Joe had first brought Valls into England. She was very kind



CH Kirkholme Oscar ("Blaze")

and gentle, but when she felt to see if he had both his "bits" the look on Scamp's face was priceless - he looked so surprised and looked in between his legs as though to say "what the heck is she doing?" I haven't a clue which two other dogs were in his class, but was over the moon when he got 2nd place in

spite of my inexperience.

Scamp was very badly savaged by a GSD when he was about 8½m old and almost stopped eating - he seemed to be living on milk and grass, and the odd mouthful of food. With the help of a fantastic GSD at the training class we began to get him over it, but it wasn't til he met all the Valls at the show that he began to eat entirely normally again, but after a week or so he again almost stopped eating - til we went to another show and at the sight of the Valls he perked up again. So we decided that we had to get him a Vall friend and asked Rosie Peacock if we could have a dog from the next litter she bred - the rest is, as they say, history - Blaze came to live with us when Scamp was 19½m old, and he (Scamp) never looked back.

Marg Dickinson lives in England

"So we entered him in the puppy dog class, and duly turned up at the show - with Scamp wearing a wide red leather collar with silver studs that I'd found over the field during a walk, and on a thick plaited rope lead!"

THE GREATEST SHOW WEEKEND EVER by Outi Huuskonen



This August we had a 3-day show in Kuopio, a city that is "only" about 130 kms from where I live. The judges on the days 1 and 2 were from Sweden, and one of them was a person who had liked Jonni when he was younger, so I decided to enter my dogs there. Last year I had showed Jonni only twice, so I was a bit nervous

INT NORD FIN S N EST CH NordicW-01 Fennican Jonathan Jovial

about how he would do, since there could be tough competition at the shows.

The shows were held from Friday to Sunday, and the first show was a National show (CAC show) and the two others International shows (CACIB shows). The judge on Friday was a nice lady, Wera Hübenthal, who was a new acquaintance to me in Vall circles. She HAD judged my husky a long time ago, but I had no idea what type of Valls this judge liked. I needn't have worried! Jonni performed well and the judge had no hesitations of putting him first. He got a great critique too, and I was very happy about that! In the BOB ring Jonni lost to the one-and-only Multi CH MultiW Geeba, but I had not expected Jonni to win HER! I was happy that he was the Best Male! This judge liked my bitch, Bella, too, so she got Very Good from the quality judging, which was nice!! This was her second time to get Very Good so that was great for me!! This judging meant that now I can register Bella's pups in the lowest price group.

On Saturday the judge was Owe Germundsson, a very knowledgeable Vall judge. He knows this breed and he has been a judge in the Swedish Main Specialty! The weather had been extremely warm on Friday and it was the same on Saturday, too. Jonni wasn't very willing to go from the shadowy corner he had found himself and I decided that I needed another handler. So a girl I know,

ex-junior handler (she is over the upper age limit now) lida Villman took Jonni to the ring. lida won Finnish Championships in Junior Handling last year and was the Finnish representative in Crufts this year and was placed among the top 10 there. lida had also won 3rd prize in EUV-06 show's Junior Handler competition so she is a very experienced handler. And she did great with Jonni! Even though there were few males that I had previously thought that could compete with my boy they had no chance. Owe put Jonni first and gave him an amazing critique! It is the best he has ever gotten! And, once again, Jonni was against Geeba in the BOB ring and once again he lost to her. But my weekend couldn't have been more perfect! Jonni was Best Male and BOB TWICE and that meant that I got 3 nice ribbons (2 for the BOS wins and 1 for the CACIB on Saturday) and 3 trophies. I had hoped to get one but now he cleaned the table. Bella got a quality judging Good from Owe but I had expected that. In fact, I had thought Owe might give Bella a Satisfactory so Good was a bit of a surprise to me. I had to be happy with that!

So, home we went, exhausted but extremely happy!

Once again Jonni has proven himself in the show ring. I had not expected him to do THAT well but the judges saw his quality and gave him credit for it! He IS a great dog. But for me he is always going to be my best friend.



Heds Bellis De Luxe

Greetings from Finland

Outi and the Valls: INT CH Fennican Jonathan Jovial "Jonni" and Heds Bellis De Luxe "Bella"

HOTEL FIRE PRECAUTIONS by Richard H. Kauffman, AKC Gazette (submitted by Marion Erp)

During the course of a show season, many of us often spend a night or two away in a hotel/motel. From time to time and as space permits, here are a few tips on what you should do if you ever find yourself in a hotel fire. The information comes from a program delivered to our east coast kennel club years ago, by the local fire department.

Contrary to what you have seen on television or in the movies, fire is not likely to chase you down and burn you to death. It's the bi-products of fire that will kill you. Super-heated fire gases (smoke) and panic will almost always be the cause of death long before the fire arrives, if it ever does. This is very important. You must know how to avoid smoke and panic to survive a hotel fire. This month we will discuss how to avoid smoke.

Where there is smoke, there is not necessarily fire. A smoldering mattress, for instance, will produce great amounts of smoke. Air conditioning and air exchange systems will sometimes pick up smoke from one room and carry it to other rooms or floors. You should keep that in mind because 70% of hotel fires are caused by smoking and matches. In any case, your prime objective should be to leave the hotel at the first sign of smoke.

Smoke, being warmer, will start accumulating at the ceiling and work its way down. Therefore you won't be able to see the exit signs, first of all. Secondly, your eyes cannot tolerate smoke, and will close no matter how hard you try to open them. It's one of your body's compensatory mechanisms. Third, the fresh air you want to breathe is at or near the floor. Get on your hands and knees (or stomach) and STAY THERE as you make your way out. Those who don't probably won't get far.

One thing you will have to overcome if you are ever in a hotel fire is panic. Panic is the product of your imagination running wild, and it will set in as soon as it dawns on you you're lost, disoriented, or you don't know what to do. Panic is contagious, and it may spread to you. Panic is almost irreversible; once it sets in, it seems to grow. Panic will make you do things that could kill you. People in a state of panic are rarely able to save themselves.

If you understand what's going on, what to do, where to go, and how to get there, panic will not set in.

Checking Your Exit

When you get to your motel/hotel room, leave the dog (s) in the car, open the door and drop your luggage. AT THAT VERY MOMENT turn around and go back into the hallway to check your exit. You may NEVER get another chance. Don't go to the bathroom, open the drapes, plop on the bed, turn on the T.V. or untuck your shirt. You may be tired, but it is CRITICAL that you develop the HABIT of *checking your exit* after you drop your luggage. It won't take 30 seconds and you may NEVER get another chance.

If there are two of you sharing a room, BOTH of you locate your exit. Talk it over as you walk towards it. Is it on the

left or right? Do you have to turn a corner? Open the exit door, what do you see? Stairs or another door? As you return to your room, COUNT the doors. Is it the sixth or seventh door? I'd hate to see you crawl into a broom closet thinking it was the exit. Are you passing any rooms where your friends are staying? If there was a fire, you may want to bang on their doors as you go by. Is there anything in the hallway, such as an ice machine, that would be in your way? As you arrive back at your room, take one more look. Get a good mental picture of what everything looks like. Do you think you could get to the exit with a "blindfold" on?

(Marion's note: Ever since I read this article, and anytime I find myself in a highrise hotel, or even one where the exit is via the hallways, not directly to the outside, I practice walking from my hotel room to the exit door, running my hand along the walls to "count" rooms in case my eyes were smoked shut. I also imagine doing this on my hands and knees, again using "feel" more than anything, to let me know how many rooms and which turns to make, to the exit door.)

Should you have to leave your room during the night, it's important to close the door behind you. This is very effective in keeping out fire and will minimize smoke damage to your belongings. Some doors take hours burn through. They are excellent "fire-stops," so close every door you go through.

Always take your key with you. Get into the habit of putting the key in the same place every time you stay in a hotel. Since every hotel has night stands, that's an excellent location. It's important that you close your door as you leave, but it's equally important you don't lock yourself out. You may find conditions in the hallway untenable and want to return to your room.

Let's suppose you wake up to smoke in your room. Grab your key of the nightstand, roll off the bed and head for the door on your hands and knees. Even if you could tolerate the smoke by standing, don't. You'll want to save your

eyes and lungs as long as possible. BEFORE you open the door, feel it with the palm of one hand. If the door or knob is quite hot, don't open it. The fire could be just outside.

As you make your way to the exit, stay against the wall on the side where the exit is. It's very easy to get lost or disoriented in a smoky atmosphere. If you're on the wrong side of the hallway, you might crawl right on by the exit. If you're in the middle of the hall, people who are running will trip over you. Stay on the same side as the exit, counting doors as you go. When you reach the exit and begin to descend, it's very important that you WALK down and hang on to the hand-rail as you go. Don't take this point lightly. The people who will be running will knock you down, and you might not be able to get up. Just hang on and stay out of everyone's way. All you have to do now is leave the building, cross the street and watch the action. When the fire is out and the smoke clears, you will be allowed to re-enter the building. If you closed your room door when you left, your belongings should be in pretty good shape.



UKC GR CH Caval's Front Paige News, looking very relaxed at a show—owned by Bonnie Conner, Skyview Kennel

SOME SHOW TIPS FROM A “NEWBIE” by Amanda Lowery

There are a few things I've picked up over the last nearly four years of showing Rakki, so I thought I'd share them with you.

- 1) Your class will never be on time, unless you're planning on it being late or early, then it will be EXACTLY on time. The mantra of dog showing is “hurry up and wait”, so bring a comfy folding chair, drinks, snacks (for humans and dogs) and a book.
- 2) Never pass up an opportunity to go to the washroom, and never pass up an opportunity to let your dog do the same (while having him make a mess in the ring is one way of calling attention to your dog, it's likely not the sort of attention you want). Training my dog to relieve himself on cue is the single most useful thing I have taught him, and it has never been more useful than at shows, I can pop him outside, say “get busy”, and he knows this is his opportunity to go if he needs do. I trained this very simply from day one: when Rakki started “taking care of business”, I'd say the cue I wanted to use (I stole “get busy” from Ian Dunbar, and it's a term I never use otherwise), I'd say it calmly with lots of praise each and every time (yes, my neighbors thought I was nuts, but they already thought that so no change there), it's very easy to just add this one minor extra step into the housetraining you're already doing, and it's incredibly useful. I've had more people at dog shows ask me how I trained this than almost anything else
- 3) Train “stand” as your dog's default behavior (in other words, train it before any other behavior and reward it hugely—make all the behaviors you'll use in showing fun, exciting and enormously rewarding). Also find a way to get your dog to give expression—Rakki looks alert and interested (“expression”) if I ask him a question (so I ask him “are you a
- 4) Find a treat your dog LOVES and use that for showing (frozen meatballs, tortellini, cheese, deli meat, liver brownies, whatever).
- 5) Attend conformation handling classes. Many obedience clubs offer conformation classes, often on a pay-as-you-go basis. I'd been attending dog shows since I was a kid, I've seen thousands of classes and dogs, and it's still amazingly tricky to sort out what you're supposed to be doing and when, and managing a lead smoothly is harder than it looks! And a good conformation instructor will really help you learn how to show off your particular dog to his or her best. In addition to this, it allows both you and your dog to actually experience the flow of a class, gets your dog used to being examined by a judge, and generally makes your first venture into the breed ring that much easier.
- 6) Handle a new puppy many times a day, every day, all over (and I do mean “all over”). This is a good idea even if you don't plan to show, since it makes vet visits much easier and it makes you familiar with what feels normal on your dog (important for health reasons). I also made a point of looking at Rakki's bite a few times a day, and would normally follow up with opening his mouth and popping a treat in, since some judges want to see the teeth in more detail than others.
- 7) Most importantly: have FUN and be a good sport. Congratulate the others in your class and be as gracious when you win as when you lose. Be polite, thank the judge and if they have time, ask for any advice they can offer you, most will happily oblige.

“There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face.” - Bern Williams



In future issues:

SVCA National Specialty Recap
Rally Obedience

Useful Resources

- “Click to Win” by Karen Pryor (clicker training for conformation showing)
- “An Eye for a Dog—Illustrated Guide to Judging Purebred Dogs” by Robert Cole (great overview of structure and what the judge is actually judging)
- “Show Me! A Dog-Showing Primer” by D. Carolyn Cole
- “Absolute Beginner's Guide to Showing Your Dog” by Cheryl Smith
- <http://ukcdogs.com/>
- <http://www.akc.org/events/conformation/beginners.cfm>



Suggestions, submissions and general comments are always welcome. You can email me at amandalowery@charter.net, or contact any of us at the addresses listed on our website: www.vallhund.net.



CKC Champion Vastgota Minonna-Nell, bred and owned by Ulla Gamberg

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