



Education Newsletter



Edition 5, January 12, 2021, BARRC Education Committee

The pandemic and other family issues in late 2020 threw this editor into a situation where she hasn't been attentive to getting out the last two planned 2020 editions of this newsletter out on a timely basis. My apologies, especially to Sigrid —who contributed the main feature of this edition well over a month ago. Sigrid has given us a delightful recap of her travels with her two Ridgebacks and insight into where to go and what to do with your canine travel buddies. I loved reading it! Thank you, Sigrid. We are also continuing the series on performance events. In this edition we are covering Barn Hunt. I've taken Barn Hunt classes and have attempted one Barn Hunt trial earning the first leg of a Barn Hunt Novice title on my dog, Taji. My dogs love Barn Hunt and the great thing about it is that any dog that can smell a rat is able to compete successfully. It is a great bonding experience for seniors – both canine and human – and doesn't require any athletic ability! - Wendy Peirce, Editor and Chair, BARRC Education Committee

On the Road with Rhodies!

Contributed by Sigrid Scharmann

I have always enjoyed road trips, and over the last few years I have taken 3 trips with my Rhodesian Ridgeback girls Asali and Leona. They are mother and daughter, 9 and 3 years, bred by me. I travel alone, and I feel much safer with a couple of big dogs, and of course it is much more fun exploring new country together, finding interesting trails and sights. Due to the Corona crisis international travel was not advisable so a lot more people were on the road taking driving vacations than normal. Usually, things quiet down after Labor Day, but not this year. Campgrounds were full and often noisy. I found visitor centers closed and some restrooms, too. Parks owned by Native American tribes, like Monument Valley, were closed and there were no tours to visit the ruins at Mesa Verde. People were health conscious and wore masks nearly everywhere.



Sigrid with Ashanti, Leona and Asali

When I go on the road I "rough it", driving and sleeping in my Astro van, and staying overnight at campgrounds. So far, all campgrounds and RV resorts we've encountered have allowed dogs, but many have a two-dog max rule. If you share such close quarters (about 4'x4'x8') it's really important to have well behaved dogs. There is just enough room for my cot and two dog beds next to me and that's where they need to stay. Preferably without barking, snoring or farting...

Trip 1: From Sea to the Sierra

On our first trip, in September, 2018, we went south on California's Hwy 1. Carmel has the most beautiful white sand beach, and it's so dog friendly! Then past San Luis Obispo we headed east towards the mountains and

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Yosemite, on narrow windy roads onto Hwy 395, visiting Mono Lake and the old mining and ghost town Bodie. Bodie was fun; dogs are allowed, on leash, to walk all around the old buildings. We briefly visited Yosemite from the east entrance, but there is not much to do with dogs. Luckily, all national forests allow dogs, some even allow dogs off-leash as long as they are under control, so we found plenty of trails to hike. Heading home to Colfax we went along Lake Tahoe. There were beautiful sights, but I could find no place to take the dogs into the water. We traveled 18 days and drove 1885 miles.

Trip 2: Cruising the Coast

Our next trip, in June, 2019, took us first west to Fort Bragg California and from there north on Hwy 1, through the redwoods, into Oregon to Bandon and across the state towards Lakeview. From there we went south on Hwy 395 back into California through Modoc, Lassen, and Plumas National Forests to get back home. We drove 1400 miles in 8 days. Hwy 1 up and down the coast is one of my favorites, I'm planning to go again in spring all the way to San Diego and back inland, including Death Valley and maybe through the desert if it's in bloom.



Trip 3: Southwestern Sojourn

On our last trip, this past September, 2020, we visited multiple southwestern states. It was good timing; we missed most of the really smoky days and the air was much better as soon as we passed Reno, Nevada and headed east on Hwy 50, the "loneliest road". Along the way we walked a couple of petroglyph trails, where dogs were allowed on leash. Next stop in Nevada, Great Basin National Park, was interesting but not dog friendly. From there we traveled south to Utah's Bryce Canyon which was beautiful but also popular and crowded. Dogs could walk on leash on the Rim Trail which is paved and multi-use. Good thing my dogs don't mind people with all kinds of outfits, wheelchairs, strollers and bicycles. They can also take in the view from the lookouts, but are not allowed on the hiking trails into the canyons. From there we went east on Hwy 12 through the Grand Staircase Escalante near Kanab, Utah. This is one of the most beautiful roads you can imagine with amazing colors and gorgeous views. We discovered a dog friendly trail along a little river and next to huge red rocks. Heading north, then east again on Hwy 24 we went through Capitol Reef National Park, then south on Hwy 95 crossing the Colorado River. We always found little side trails on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land in Utah where the



dogs could run free and explore. There were photo opportunities galore with so many beautiful sights to see. Utah's Natural Bridges National Monument was next but was not great for dogs. There was no hiking on trails, just short walks to the overlooks.

Then on to Colorado and into the high mountains on the San Juan Skyway. A side trip to Telluride was interesting. The gondola operates all year round and they allow dogs! With a bit of a push, I got my girls inside and up we went to the other side of the mountain, and back. Beautiful views! Back south through the historic mining towns Ouray and Silverton I drove on a winding narrow highway that goes up to 11,000 feet!



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There were lots of trails to explore right and left – unfortunately not anymore - now that area has been damaged by forest fires. After Durango, our next stop was Mesa Verde National Park. Due to Covid-19, the tours to the Anasazi ruins were canceled but dogs are not allowed there anyway, so we just looked from above. We found another place to see ruins up close, though: Hovenweep National Monument located on land in southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah. Dogs are allowed, on leash, on the loop trail, so we enjoyed a nice walk. Another pleasant discovery was the Valley of the Gods National Monument with gorgeous red rock formations, similar to Monument Valley! It requires travel on 17 miles of gravel road, but it is so worth it. You can stop when and where you want, take the dogs, hike, and get a close look at the rocks. It's all allowed.



In Page, Arizona we “splurged” and stayed at a Motel 6, it's nice that they allow two dogs and don't charge extra. Close to Lake Powell we discovered the “Hanging Garden Trail”, a nice walk for dogs on leash through salmon-colored rocks and sand. Continuing west on Hwy 89A in Arizona we stopped at Marble Canyon and the Vermillion Cliffs before heading south to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. We encountered lots of people at the main overlook, and dogs too. They are allowed to walk on the paved rim trail. There was no space left in the campground, so we headed back to Jacob Lake and stayed at the Kaibab Camper Village, conveniently right next to a trailhead. We left Jacob Lake, heading west through Fredonia, Arizona, with a stop at Pipe Spring National Monument.

Back into Utah, we veered off on a little side road and discovered Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park. It is beautiful, looks just like the name implies and you can take the dogs! Next, we drove through Zion National Park which is beautiful but not dog friendly. No hiking on real trails, just another paved multi use one, but at least it's next to a river.



Throughout this trip we avoided freeways but in St. George, Utah we had to get on Interstate 15 to go west towards Las Vegas, Nevada. It was a very hot and extremely windy day, so exploring the Valley of Fire and Lake Mead in southern Nevada wasn't as much fun as I had hoped. I opted to stay in a motel and the La Quinta Inn in Las Vegas was pretty nice and dog friendly. Originally, I planned a drive through Death Valley, California but due to the heat I changed plans and we headed north on Hwy 395 instead to spend the last night in Lee Vining at Mono Lake, California. That RV Resort had a nice trail for the dogs through the sagebrush. After a pretty drive around Lake Tahoe and over the mountains we arrived back home in Colfax, after 13 days and 2973 miles.

The following map will give you an idea of our route, highlighted in yellow, through Nevada, Colorado and Arizona.

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On the Road with Rhodies - Southwestern Sojourn

Sigrid's Tips for the Trip

I carefully plan and make lists for everything I need to take. So far, I haven't missed any essential item or taken too much either except maybe once. On my first trip, I took an x-pen for the dogs but it proved to be too awkward to set up securely. The dogs could move it or knock it over and I found a tether works better. I measure out the dog food I'll need, plus a little extra and treats and biscuits. It is basically what they are used to getting at home. Just in case, I also take their coats. We have travel dog beds which are 2'x3' and easy to clean. You need to decide what personal items are necessary depending on the available space. I pare it down, choose light weight and non-breakable items. Clothing needed depends on when and where you go but I'm prepared for everything. So far, I have been lucky to not have to use my rain gear. I take a first aid kit with items for me and the dogs but, fortunately, I've never needed to use it.

Planning the Trip

Think of the places you always wanted to see and then plan your route. I like a real paper map for that. For my route planning I use Google Maps as well as AAA road maps. For the trip through the southwest, I used an old one called "Guide to Indian Country". Don't make each leg of your journey too long. Up to 3 hours of driving is enough for me. That leaves enough time for sightseeing and a few shorter hikes (my preference) or a longer hike with the dogs. Search the web to find out what you can do with your dogs in the parks and along the way.

- In California, dogtrekker.com is helpful, or bringfido.com for all of the USA.
- Find dog friendly accommodations, motels, campgrounds or RV Resorts, depending on your camping and travel style.
- Check the campground's websites. Some have fenced dog areas or trails, others nothing at all. Most have a two-dog rule, all request to keep dogs on leash, don't allow excessive barking, and naturally you have clean up after them.
- In most national parks beware of the bears. Don't leave food out and do carry bear spray.



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You can do rustic, as in take a backpack, a tent, some food and your dog, or go glamping in a big trailer or motorhome, and everything in between. Lots of things are possible and fun. I prefer to stay in my 4x4 van, that way I can go pretty much everywhere but it's safer than sleeping in a tent. If you rent a trailer or motorhome, make sure to practice driving and backing up first. It takes some time to get the hang of it.

Here's some information that may be helpful when traveling or just hiking with your dog on public wildlands:

National Forests: Dogs are allowed in all national forests, most areas do not require dogs to be on a leash, but they should be under control at all times. Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet while in developed recreation areas and on interpretive trails.

National Parks: Most allow dogs, but only in areas a car can go, too. Usually on and along roads, picnic areas, multi-use trails, lookouts and campgrounds, on leash only. Check the park website.



National Monuments: Most allow dogs and some are a little less restrictive than National Parks. Check the website for the specific Monument.

BLM lands: Dogs are welcome on most BLM managed trails and can be off leash, but under control. Check the trail website or call the local BLM field office for specific leash policies. Camping is allowed as well.

National Recreation Areas: Dogs are mostly welcome, but check the website.

California State Parks: Most allow dogs to a certain degree, but it varies from park to park. More info is available the following website: <https://www.parks.ca.gov/dogs>.

Dog Do's and Don'ts

Before you take your Ridgeback off on an extended road trip here are a few things to teach your dog that will make the trip so much easier for you, your dog and the people you encounter:

- Make sure your dog is comfortable in the car, even on longer rides or on winding roads.
- Socialize! Make sure the dog is comfortable around strange people and dogs. Canine Good Citizen (CGC) training helps, but it might not go far enough in real life situations. Lots of things may be new, exciting, uncomfortable, or scary.

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- A dog should come when called, anytime and anywhere, with or without a leash.
- Get your dog used to being tethered. I use a plastic-coated cable because a leash or rope can easily be bitten through. It's helpful at campgrounds, picnic areas, and if you have to leave him alone briefly to use a restroom.
- Walking on leash without pulling or getting people tangled, even when there are distractions. It's a necessary skill if you walk on the sidewalk in historic towns, or with crowds on multi use trails. I like using a Flexi leash, so they can have some room to explore on trails, but I can reel them in and keep them close when we meet people or dogs. It takes some practice, but works well for one or two dogs, and if you pay attention to your surroundings.
- Stay and wait when asked.
- No jumping up on strangers or being overly friendly, which can also scare some people.
- No excessive barking, especially at campgrounds. Teach "be quiet".
- No food stealing. The dog trying to get the steak cooking over an open fire can get injured.



Make sure your dog wears a collar with an id tag that includes your phone number in addition to being microchipped. Always carry proof of ownership and the dog's vaccination record on hand. This can be helpful if he does get lost and you need to get him back from Animal Control.

Last but not least, have fun! Don't overdo or go for longer than is enjoyable. Be flexible. Don't let a plan dictate what you do each day. Conditions change. Traveling with dogs can be a challenge but if you are prepared, adaptable and willing, it can be very rewarding.



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How to Smell a Rat!

Are you looking for a dog sport that is easy to learn, takes no particular athletic ability from either you or your dog, can be performed by both young and old dogs and handlers and is something that is just plain fun? Take a look at Barn Hunt.

Barn Hunt is essentially a game of hide and seek for dogs. One or more rats (depending on level of difficulty) are hidden among stacked bales of straw and it is the dog's job to find the rat(s) with their noses. It is a nice follow-on activity to the Scent Work talked about in the last BARRC Education Newsletter.

Barn Hunt competition is based on what many breeds of dog were bred for: ridding farms, barns, crop storage areas, and homes of destructive vermin. Even though Rhodesian Ridgebacks were not specifically bred to be ratters, they can be exceptionally good at it and competing in Barn Hunt can provide the opportunity for Ridgeback owners to test instinct and the working traits of their dogs. So why not give it a try?

How to get started with Barn Hunt

Barn Hunt trials are managed by the Barn Hunt Association (BHA). Although most BHA titles are recognized and can be recorded on pedigrees by the American Kennel Club (AKC), your dog must also be registered with BHA to compete. So, the first thing you need to do is register your dog with the [Barn Hunt Association](#).

Next, you may want to consider taking a Barn Hunt class or series of classes for you and your dog to understand each other's rat hunting and finding cues and to learn the basic do's and don'ts during competition. The following will provide some insight into Barn Hunt but a class really instills all the things you need to think about and exposes you to the rules of Barn Hunt that are not common to other dog sports. A few of the clubs and training facilities that offer Barn Hunt classes are listed on the right.

Barn Hunt Basics

First off, live rats are used in Barn Hunt trials but it must be emphasized that the rats are never put in harm's way. During competition, the rats are always protected by a tube that dogs cannot penetrate. One of the roles of the Barn Hunt trial "Rat Wrangler" is to ensure that all rats are humanely treated and are rested if they become fatigued.

Barn Hunt is open to any dog, after their six-month birthdate, that can navigate over and around bales of straw and through a tunnel 18" wide and a bale width tall. There are height divisions to equalize efforts for dogs of the same general size.

Trials are set up with a blind area and a ring where competition occurs. All handlers and dogs must remain behind the blind until they are called to compete. The ring is generally set up with one or more multi-level stacks of bales with at least one tunnel through a stack. Bales may also be placed in and around the perimeter of the ring in a single or multi-level fashion. Then, closed plastic tubes with airholes are hidden under loose straw in and around the stacks of bales. These tubes can be empty, contain bedding from a rat cage, or a live rat.

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Linda D'Antonio's "Kuyu"



Barn Hunt training in the Bay Area

Here are a few of the training facilities and clubs accessible to BARRC members that offer Barn Hunt training. Several also offer BHA sanctioned trials as well. They are listed alphabetically with no recommendation for one over the other. Individual or group classes may be offered in single or multi-week sessions. Cost varies.

All Dogs Sports Park

info@alldogssportspark.com

Sycamore Lane Kennels, 5111 W Sargent Rd,
Lodi, CA 95242

Bay Area K9 Rattitudes, 510-378-9417

<https://www.bak9rattitudes.com/>

Newark, CA

Gold Country K9, (209) 223-9663

info@goldcountryk9.com

6355 State Hwy 104, Lone, CA 95640

Revolution Dog Sports, 775-813-0856

<http://revolutiondogsports.com>

Reno, NV 89503

Other Barn Hunt clubs, events and training facilities may be found on the [BHA club](#) site.



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How to Smell a Rat! continued from page 7

The object of the game in Barn Hunt is for the dog to find the rat or rats that are hidden within the bales of straw in the ring and to let the handler know when they find a rat. The handler then shouts RAT! The dog must also climb up on the bales and go through the tunnel in search of rats. If the rat(s) are found correctly within the allotted time, rather than empty tubes or ones with bedding, the objective has been achieved!

The Barn Hunt Association offers several levels of classes from which your dog can achieve titles: Barn Hunt Instinct; Novice, Open, Senior and Master Barn Hunt; and Barn Hunt Championship. Like AKC Rally events, there are A and B classes for Novice through Master classes to provide dogs and handlers to continue to compete at the same level while achieving new titles. With the exception of Barn Hunt Instinct, the difference between each of the classes is in the number of tubes, the number of these tubes containing rats, the time limit and the difficulty of the ring layout. Barn Hunt Instinct is a quick way to see if your dog is keen to find a rat. The three types of tubes are placed in the open and the objective is for the dog to tell the handler which one holds the rat. BHA also offers Fun Trials and non-regular classes such as "Crazy 8s" to enhance skills and for training. Barn Hunt titles that can be earned are shown in the diagram on the right. You can submit these titles to the AKC, with the exception of Barn Hunt Instinct, for inclusion on the dog's pedigree.

The [Barn Hunt Association web site](#) is the ultimate source for information on the sport of Barn Hunt. You will find tabs off the main site that provide info on the rules and responsibilities, frequently asked questions (FAQs), clubs, events and other information. There is also some good, basic information on the sport provided by the [AKC](#).

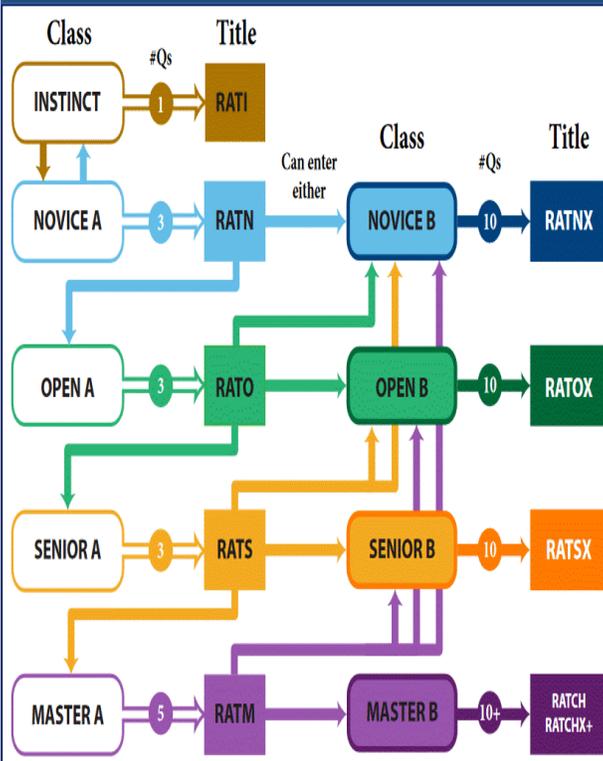
On to the Trials!

Once you are ready, you can find upcoming Barn Hunt trials on the [BHA calendar](#). For instance, there are four trials in Lone, California on January 16th and 17th (two trials each day), and there are two trials in Minden, Nevada on January 24th. It is typical to have two separate trials each day of competition and you can enter one or both trials each day. Barn Hunt trials are held fairly frequently in northern California and northern Nevada. They can be held in conjunction with an AKC all breed conformation show or independently. Trials can be held indoors or outside and, because each dog/handler team competes individually, social distancing and other COVID-19 practices are easy to attain.

Fun Facts: Since 2013, 154 Rhodesian Ridgebacks have been awarded BHA titles. There has only been one Ridgeback to achieve a Barn Hunt Championship title of RATCH: "Gigi" who was owned by Linnea Post and Lyn Valdivia. She achieved this significant title in 2017.



Barn Hunt Association Title Progression Chart



In the chart above, the A classes are listed on the far left. Next are the Qualifications (Qs) needed to get the title at that level. Once you have the title the solid arrows show you where you can go next. For example, once you have your RATS title (orange box), you can follow the solid gold arrows to see that you can next enter either Master A, Senior B, Open B, or Novice B. Each X title takes 10 qualifying scores.