

# SETTER LETTER



*October 2025 Issue: Autumn Edition*



***Happy Howl-oween!***

*(photo by Melinda Benbow)*

## **ESAA President's Message**

***Greetings, My English Setter  
Friends!***

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the National! Events ran smoothly and judges were very complimentary, so *kudos* to the show chairs and their hard-working committees.

The Board had a very productive meeting at the National and I'd like to go over some of the highlights:



### **New Board Members**

We welcomed three new members: Sabrina Rundle, Paula Spiering and Jennifer Stastny. We thanked outgoing members Cindy Rice, Judi Hunter and Leslie Crawford, and are thankful that they will continue to stay involved in ESAA operations in other subject areas.

### **Health Clinic**

The Board decided we needed to do more to encourage full disclosure of thyroid results to OFA to boost data for future researchers. Starting in 2026, anyone participating in thyroid testing through our clinic at the ESAA subsidized rate will be required to sign OFA's form releasing all results.

### **Communications**

Chair Janet Gray reported that our Instagram account has been a phenomenal success with view numbers through the roof. Her team is going to include important messaging on events and resources to encourage participation. The team is also going to look at TikTok for sharing information and letting folks know about our wonderful breed.

### **Best of Breed Bowls**

After thorough review of club feedback and new options, the Board decided that the traditional bowl will only be given to the National Specialty winner and the National Field Trial champion. Beginning March 1, 2026, clubs holding ESAA regional specialties and their two club specialties will be entitled to a platter with the same engraving as was on the bowl. The Board had an example of the platter on hand and all agreed it was lovely. Talk to your Regional VP for more information and photos.

### **CHIC Futurity Award**

The Board renamed the Dick Fox CHIC Futurity Award the Linwood CHIC Futurity Award beginning in Seattle. Lin Sell has been the architect and previously anonymous donor of this award for all the past years and has generously provided additional funding for this award for the next 30 years!

Lastly, the Board discussed whether to increase our dues. Dues have remained at the same level for decades. In the meantime, our fixed expenses have gone up and there is increasing need for our philanthropic mission supporting worthy causes. ESAA does more for members beyond maintaining the breed standard and holding events. We develop and provide educational materials, we connect the public with responsible breeders, we publish newsletters and maintain English Setter history, we fund cancer research, provide disaster relief, offer scholarships, support museums with recurring grants and so on. This is just a snapshot of what ESAA offers and hopes to continue to offer in its memberships with the slight bump of \$10 for individual/family and \$25 for clubs.

Thank you for reading!

*~Julie*

## **2025 English Setter National Specialty**

Seattle, Washington

September 21 to September 26



**2025 ESAA NATIONAL**

# BEST OF BREED WINNER

## GCH CaRob Rockrainbow Epilogue

(Sevenoaks Earth Wind And Rain x Huntwood Carob Bad Alibi)

Owners: Ron & Debbie Springer and Carol Ulrich

Handler: Kayla Kozak

Judge: Michael Faulkner

Pictured with the Wingfield Chebaco Challenge Trophy and the Annie O'Brien Award

Congratulations to all winning competitors at the ESAA National! Photos are posted on Facebook on the page [\*\*ESAA CLUB\*\*](#).

Furthermore, congratulations to all winners of the **ESAA Annual Awards**. For a list of our 2024 winners, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#). We know how much work, commitment and time required to win one of these awards! Congratulations to all!



What does it take to build a bloodline that leaves its mark on history? In this episode, master breeder Mary Nowak talks about the journey to develop Honeygait English Setters, from her very first

**Matt Stelter of the Better Breeder Institute writes:** *In the newest episode of the Better Breeder Chronicles podcast, we feature Mary Nowak of Honeygait English Setters. The show is developed for all purebred conservation breeders, but in this episode, Mary shares specific insight on the English Setter breed. We'd welcome you to share it with your members*

*Best wishes to ESAA!*

puppy to producing Ch. Honeygait N Lampliter Fever, the winningest English Setter of all-time with 40 All-Breed Best in Show wins.

Mary shares the mentors who shaped her, the philosophy of linebreeding that defined her program, and the dogs that carried her legacy into the record books. Whether you're a seasoned exhibitor or simply love great dogs with health and history, the Honeygait story is one you won't want to miss.

*We're grateful to the Better Breeder Institute for sharing this podcast, and we're all so proud of Mary Nowak!*

To view the podcast, click

**HERE.**



*Please fire off a brief email about what you like, what you don't like, and what you'd like to see:*

[LindaLauby@outlook.](mailto:LindaLauby@outlook)

## **From the Editor**

I'm curious as to who reads this newsletter. What do you find interesting? What topics would you like to see added?

Each issue, I receive a couple of kind thank-you emails from members, but for the most part, there's no reaction. Is the Setter Letter something that ESAA should continue? I'm oh-so-grateful to those few members who regularly provide information, and I want to give a call-out to perennial contributors BJ Parsons, Michelle Raisor, Coleen Raber and Ross Rice.

com

The time invested in creating this newsletter is substantial, and I'd appreciate your thoughts.

Thanks so much,  
*Linda*



## The Purina Parent Club Partnership (PPCP)

*Is the lack of ESAA member participation jeopardizing future research?*

ESAA's Health and Genetics Chairman Michelle Raisor says, according to Purina's Donor Advised Fund Statement, "It shows that there were no members of ESAA that sent in their receipts to Purina in order for us to get the PPCP contribution from them. **Those contributions from Purina make up almost all of the money we use for research.** Our balance is incredibly low and it would be tough to support any innovative research grant with a significant amount of money."

For those members unfamiliar with the Purina Parent Club Partnership Program (PPCP), for every \$100 of qualifying Purina Points earned, Purina donates \$10 to the participating national parent club on our behalf. Of this donation, half goes to the breed club and half to the club's Donor Advised Fund at the AKC Canine Health Foundation. In effect, ESAA's partnership with the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) fuels groundbreaking research that transforms the lives of dogs.

Dr. Raisor continues: "I am concerned about the Purina program. I just learned from a Purina rep that receipts are only good for one calendar year. So, if you have receipts to turn in from 2024, they will not take them. They will only take receipts from 2025."

Following is ESAA's Second Quarter 2025 Donor Advised Fund Statement, showing activity through 6/30/25:

1/1/2025 Balance..... \$10,775.17  
Contributions..... \$0.00  
PPCPP Contribution..... \$0.00  
Investment Earnings.... \$551.91  
Research Support..... \$538.76  
6/30/2025 Balance..... \$10,788.32

## From the AKC Health Foundation

***Want to know  
more about how  
your Donor  
Advised Fund  
(DAF) held at  
CHF works?***

When you direct your donations, you're not just giving, you're choosing to fund specific research areas. Your DAF held at CHF is a powerful tool that allows you to steer your support toward the areas that matter most to you.

Your DAF grows at CHF and your participation in the PPCPP maximizes those efforts, increasing your impact and investment in canine health. Purina tracks weight circle



### **New Opportunities in Areas Important to Your Breed**

#### ***AKC Canine Health Foundation***

We're excited to share a set of grant recommendations tailored to health areas that matter to you and/or your breed community. These active research studies represent the latest priorities in canine health such as cancer, mobility, neurology, and genetic disease. We invite you to designate a portion of your DAF to help move the research forward.

**Grant Title: 03387-A — Luteinizing Hormone Receptor Activation Interferes with Canine Thyroid Hormone Secretion in Response to Thyroid Stimulating Hormone In Vitro ([LINK](#))**

*"Hypothyroidism is the most common hormonal imbalance in dogs. It is a lifelong condition that significantly*

submissions for Pro Club members, and one-half of each club's individual annual earnings is issued directly to CHF to support research.

With your DAF, you have the flexibility to guide support toward CHF-funded grants or research programs whenever you choose.

Per the Purina Participation Agreement signed in 2019, breed clubs participating in the PPCPP agree to move funds deposited by Purina into the DAF toward research that benefits their breed. **If a club does not allocate funds within 24 months, 25 percent of the PPCPP earnings will be directed to general canine health research.**

*decreases quality of life and is associated with several other negative health outcomes including obesity, lethargy, and skin conditions."*

**Grant Title: 03293** — Foundational Studies for Translating FGFR Inhibition in Canine Osteosarcoma [\*\*\(LINK\)\*\*](#)

*"The significance of this study lies in its potential to adapt new chemotherapy types, already used in human oncology, for veterinary clinical practice, opening the door to clinical studies in dogs. Additionally, it establishes a preclinical model for personalized medicine in dogs, taking into account how the surrounding cell environment affects FGFR splicing and cell invasion."*

**Grant Title: 03410-A** — Short Chain Fatty Acids and Calcium Oxalate Urolithiasis in Dogs [\*\*\(LINK\)\*\*](#)

*"Urolithiasis (urinary stone disease) is a painful urinary disorder in dogs, and calcium oxalate (CaOx) is one of the most common types of urolith. This stone type is not amenable to dissolution with diet or medications, necessitating costly methods of physical removal, such as surgery. Following stone removal, recurrence rates are as high as 50% in 1-2 years, highlighting an urgent need for improved prevention strategies."*



Following is information on a

**CLINICAL  
STUDY**

## grant partially funded this year by ESAA:

SUMMARY Grant 03011: A GD3 Nano-Scaled Liposomal Cancer Vaccine Clinical Trial for Canine Hemangiosarcoma

Principal Investigator: Rowan Milner, BVSc, MMedVet, PhD Research Institution: University of Florida - Board of Trustees

Grant Amount: \$168,550.20

This research proposes to use a vaccine that investigators have extensive experience within canine melanoma and osteosarcoma (bone cancer). New preliminary research indicates that the vaccine target, GD3, is present in hemangiosarcoma (HSA), similar to melanoma and osteosarcoma use. All dogs will get standard-of-care treatment and randomized into two groups: one receiving the GD3-based vaccine and the other receiving placebo. Since vaccine use for melanoma and osteosarcoma have shown promising results, investigators hope that dogs with splenic HSA will respond similarly.

Report of Progress: In-vitro research performed in the Milner Comparative Oncology Laboratory has confirmed the presence of the vaccine target (GD3 and GD2) in naturally occurring splenic HSA samples. The Principal Investigator requested and was awarded a no-cost extension with a new project end date of February 28, 2025.

This trial is supported by donations and conducted in partnership with the AKC Canine Health Foundation, which continues to fund related research.

## Vaccine Study for Dogs with Splenic Hemangiosarcoma

The University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine is currently recruiting dogs recently diagnosed with hemangiosarcoma for clinical research trial. This investigational trial is for the development of a vaccine for future treatment, specifically, of splenic hemangiosarcoma in dogs.

*Recruitment period ends May 3, 2026*

If you're interested in participating in the clinical study, click **[HERE](#)**



*Photo courtesy of the late Garth Gourlay*

## **Mentorship**

***By Mia Vavrova***

(first published in Facebook's "ESAA ANNUALS - history corner" on 8/14/2025)

I would like to start a debate regarding this topic as it has been on my mind and cooking in my head for a while. I am looking for others' opinions and experiences regarding

MENTORSHIP: What it means to you and how it works or should work.

I have been in my breed for over 10 years now, attending my very first National specialty in 2014. I remember the overwhelming feeling of looking at all dogs that looked identical to me, seeing no faults, just beauty. I could not wait to own my very first show dog.

After contacting multiple breeders in the USA and having no luck as they either did not have anything planned, or the second I said I would like to show, they stopped communicating with me. I was extremely lucky my breeder in Europe took chances on me and I got a pick-of-the-litter-quality female. This starts my point 1:

**1. Getting a first show dog** – being a breeder myself, now I fully understand the reluctant assertiveness of breeders to sell quality foundation to new people, as there is a huge amount of trust that goes with it, which gets broken so many times. I am not sure what the right solution is. Very few have the drive and passion I have had, I guess. What I did [with one of my buyers] was, I sold a male as a pet, but the family let me show and finish him. I know placing show dogs is stressful, and breeders can feel lots of pressure, but we do need to take chances on newbies and start them with quality. I have heard so many negative stories from so many people, I understand our breed is not the easiest in terms of presentation, but we need to do better as our numbers are falling.

To read Mia's complete article, click **[HERE](#)**.

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# ESAA National Walking Gun Dog Championship

FT National Walking Gun Dog Championship  
*English Setters Only*

Dates:

- Trial: Monday, December 8 – Tuesday, December 9, 2025
- Entries Open: Wednesday, October 1 @ 8:00 AM
- Entries Close: Sunday, December 7 @ 6:00 PM

Entry Fee: \$150

Judges: Kelly Lester & Mike Braddock

Location: Munroc Farm  
2585 N Middletown Rd  
Paris, KY 40361

For more information or to enter, contact:

- B. J. Parsons – Event Secretary
- 53 Blueberry Ridge Ln, Zirconia, NC 28790
- (828) 606-8629
- bjsetters@aol.com

Add to your calendar & come run with the best!  
Approved AKC Field Trial Event



For more information on the ESAA  
National Walking Gun Dog Championship,  
click [HERE](#).

**A Rarity Worth Celebrating:  
The Remarkable Achievement of a Dual Champion  
English Setter**

In the world of purebred dogs, we often celebrate milestones — championship points, field titles, obedience ribbons, and more. But among these achievements, one stands out as a shining beacon of true versatility and dedication: the **Dual Champion**.

For those unfamiliar, a *Dual Champion* is a dog who has earned both a **Conformation Champion title (CH)** and a **Field Champion title (FC)**. In other words, the dog has been judged to meet the breed standard in structure and movement **and** has demonstrated exceptional hunting ability in competition against other bird dogs. To achieve this in a breed like the English Setter is nothing short of extraordinary.

Why? Because there are only **22 Dual Champions** in the history of the English Setter breed. That's right — just 22. By contrast, breeds like the German Shorthaired Pointer, Pointer, and Weimaraner have produced **hundreds, even thousands** of dual champions over the years. This isn't to say English Setters are less capable, but rather that **we as a community haven't pushed the boundaries of versatility in the same way**. Not yet.

And that's why this accomplishment deserves the spotlight.

### WHAT IT TAKES

Becoming a dual champion isn't accidental — it's intentional. It means taking the time to develop a dog's skills in both arenas:

- **Conformation:** Competing in the show ring requires an English Setter who exemplifies the breed standard in appearance, structure, and movement. It takes handling skill, conditioning, and often persistence through many shows.
- **Field:** To become a Field Champion, a Setter must compete in pointing dog field trials and earn wins in open stakes. These dogs must have intense bird drive, range, biddability, and athleticism. They must point, back, and retrieve with finesse and reliability, often under judgment in challenging conditions.

To reach dual status, a dog — and handler — must juggle **two**

**entirely different disciplines**, communities, and expectations. And it's not just about titles. It's about demonstrating the **complete English Setter** — form and function, beauty and brains.

## WHY IT MATTERS

In an era where dog sports are becoming more specialized, the dual champion reminds us what our breed was meant to be: a graceful, capable hunting dog with elegance and endurance. These dogs were never meant to just *look pretty* or *just hunt well* — they were bred to do **both**.

Celebrating dual champions helps protect our breed's future. It challenges us to breed, train, and show dogs that honor the full picture of what an English Setter should be. It strengthens the relationships among breeders, handlers, hunters, and judges. And maybe most important — it **inspires**.

## AN INVITATION, NOT A JUDGMENT

Let me be clear: this isn't about saying you're not doing enough if you aren't pursuing a Dual Championship. Every trail walked, bird pointed, ribbon earned, or moment shared with your Setter has value.

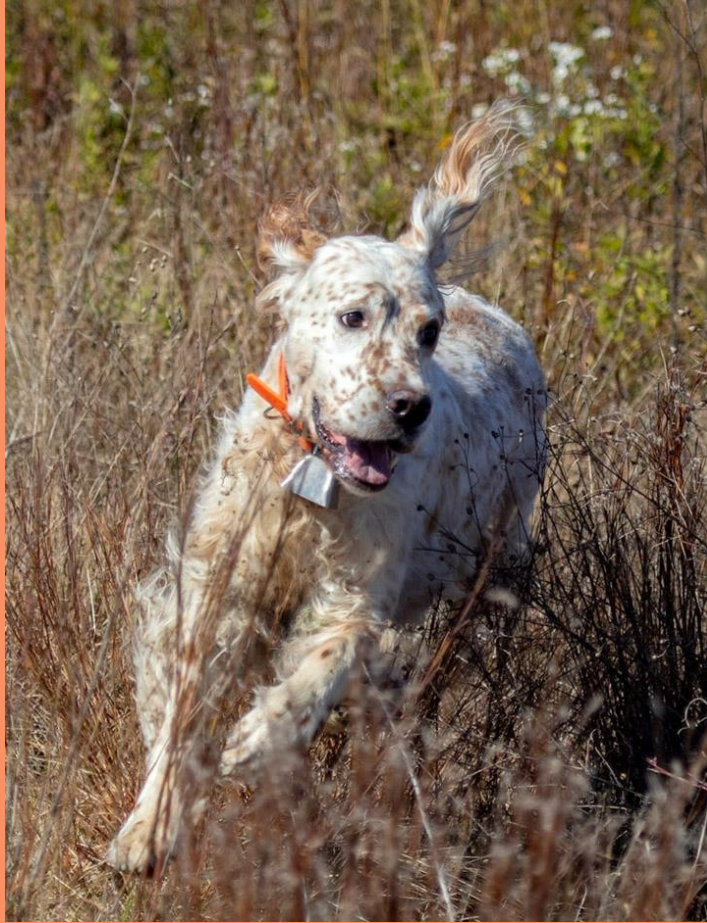
But I hope this article makes you **curious**. Curious about what's possible. Curious about that show dog's natural point, or that bird dog's flowing trot. Because the more we explore all sides of our breed, the more we learn, the more we preserve, and the more we grow.

So here's to the Dual Champions — those rare, remarkable representatives of our breed. And here's to the future ones, too.

Let's make 22 just the beginning.

*For a PDF of all our Dual Champions, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).*

**Editor's Note:** In reading background information regarding this article, I found that the first Dual Champion English Setter finished in 1985.



*Photo by Jennifer Necker*



(From the **American Veterinary Medical Association**)

### **AVMA News:**

**RECOVER Initiative guidelines debut for newborn resuscitation, emphasize lung aeration**

*The Reassessment Campaign on Veterinary Resuscitation (RECOVER) Initiative has debuted Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines aimed at equipping veterinary teams to step in quickly and effectively in aiding puppies and kittens immediately after birth.*

“There is evidence that more than 10 percent of puppies born after difficult labor, or simply even born by Caesarean section, die within the first 24 hours of birth,” Dr. Jamie Burkitt, guidelines co-chair of RECOVER, told AVMA News. “Until now, there has been no evidence-based guideline or clear consensus regarding best practices to support newborn puppies and kittens as they make the challenging transition from intra- to extra-uterine life.”

Click **here** for the complete article.

# ***Why You Love Your Dog More Than Your Kids or Grandkids (And You Don't Feel Guilty About It)***

***By Michelle J. Raisor, PhD***

Let's face it: if you're a dog owner and a parent or grandparent, chances are someone in the house is getting away with murder – and it's not the kids. Nope. It's that four-legged snack-stealing bed-hogging ball of unconditional love you call an English setter. And the dirty little secret no one talks about is that you love that dog just a smidge more than the actual kids. It's okay. You're among friends and fellow traitors to human offspring.

Before you clutch your pearls, let me explain. You **do** love your kids. Of course you do. You carried them, maybe birthed them, and have spent years ensuring they didn't stick forks in electrical outlets or try to "see what happens" when you microwave a crayon. But your dog? He doesn't back talk, doesn't demand Roblox gift cards, and has never once said, "You're the worst mom ever." (Even after you've cut his toenails.)

*To read Michelle's entire article on loving your dog more, click **HERE**.*





*Photo by Gayle T. Tiller*

Michelle J. Raisor, PhD  
Health and Genetics Chairman  
[michelle.raisor@blinn.edu](mailto:michelle.raisor@blinn.edu)  
*979.255.1919 cell*

## How Ring Doorbell Plans to Help Lost Dogs

From **Winpro's Weekly Wag**: "Ring Doorbell is hoping to make it easier for missing pets to return home. Starting in November, Ring is rolling out a new feature, called Search Party, that uses AI technology to match dog sightings on outdoor cameras to photos of missing dogs. Once a dog owner reports a missing pet, neighboring cameras will be included in the "search party." If the dog is spotted on camera, the neighbor has the choice of sharing the information with the owner of the missing dog, helping to maintain privacy controls. While this feature initially is only available for dogs, the company hopes to expand it to cats in the future."



# Canine Herpes

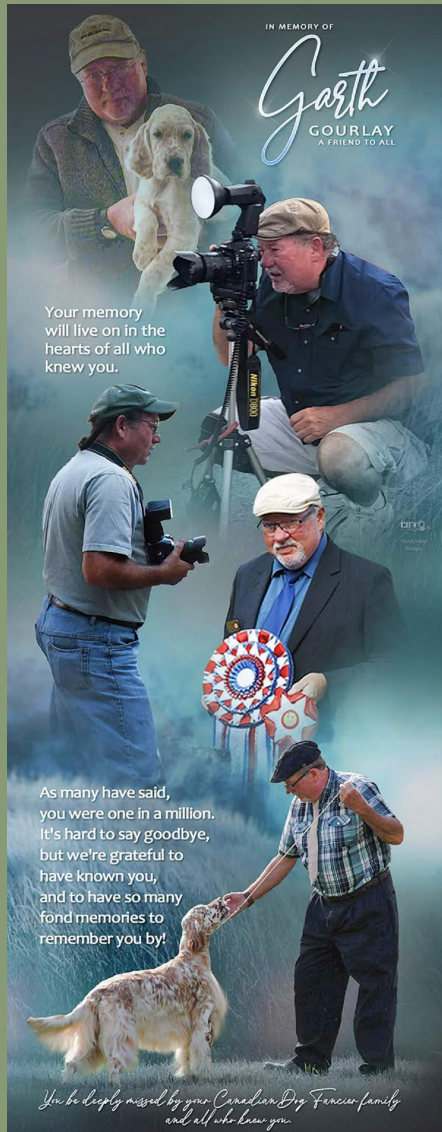
## VIRUS AS A GENITAL INFECTION IN THE DOG

Catharina Linde Forsberg, DVM, PhD, DipECAR, Sweden

Contrary to common belief among dog breeders, an increasing number of studies on reproductive problems and puppy deaths in dogs clearly indicate that comparatively few are, in fact, caused by genital infections. The most often implicated genital infectious agents in the dog are *Brucella canis*, *Canine Herpesvirus*, and the commensal bacteria beta-hemolytic streptococci, *Escherichia coli*, various *Pasteurella* species and staphylococci. The commensal bacteria are so-called opportunistic pathogens, meaning that in healthy individuals, they constitute the normal microbiome, but they may cause disease in individuals, which for some reason have a compromised immune system or suffer from an unrelated disease.

To read Dr. Forsberg's entire article on the canine herpes virus, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).

### *In Memoriam*



*Tribute image courtesy of  
Jeannette Desruisseaux*



## **Memorial Service for Kate Hanlon**

Saturday, November 1,  
2025  
(following Groups)  
Old Fort Cluster Dog Show  
Allen County War  
Memorial Coliseum  
4000 Parnell Avenue  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

## **Celebration of Life for Garth Gourlay**

Saturday, November 22,  
2025  
1 pm – 4pm  
Waterdown Sportsmen's  
Club  
33 Concession 12 E  
Freelton, ON L0R 1K0

## **MINUTES: ESAA Board of Directors**

**Videoconference . Board of Directors . June 10, 2025**

Click **HERE** for board minutes

**Board of Directors Annual Meeting . September 22, 2025**

*Click **HERE** for board minutes*

**ESAA Annual Meeting . September 26, 2025**

*Click **HERE** for board minutes*

**NEW TITLES:**

Information  
received after the  
*Setter Letter*  
deadline will go into  
the following  
month's issue.

Click here to  
educate yourself on  
all of AKC's titles  
and abbreviations  
listed alphabetically.

Click here to view all  
AKC sport titles.

**Do you have a new field,  
agility, obedience,  
conformation or other title  
on your English Setter?**

Please submit the following  
information to **Ross Rice**:  
**in the order listed below:**

**Complete Name of Dog**  
**New Title (acronym only)**  
**Month Title was Attained**  
**Age of Dog, Breeder(s),**  
**Owner(s)**

**NOTE:** in the email subject line,  
please write **NEW TITLE**

*click **HERE** for*

**NEW TITLE SUBMISSIONS**

***June-September 2025***



## ***"Dreamset American Boy"***

*(Photo courtesy of Julia Åhlin)*

**ESAA Website**



**Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter! If you have any suggestions or requests, please contact Linda Lauby, *Setter Letter* editor.**

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