Hello again, good friends and readers. We are in the last week in March as I write this and summer has set in with a fury. We’ve had temperatures in the mid 80’s for the past two weeks and have already had more rain than we had all of last year. This weather is really nice but most likely we will pay for it. Our fruit trees and the most trees in the woods are blooming and we’re almost certain to get some frost or freeze yet. We’ve had a lot of very turbulent weather, too. Not right here at home but all around us.

I have some sad news to convey to you this month. Jim Rhea called and said that Joe Brewer, Rison, AR has passed away after a hard fought battle with lung cancer. Joe and his entire family had been members of our Association for many years and were very active on the competition squirrel hunting scene. They dropped out for a spell but had been back with us for the last few years. He was also a lifetime member of the Original Mountain Cur Breeders Association and had served on their Board of Directors. He was retired from the U.S. Air Force after more than twenty years of service. He served in Vietnam during that war. I was closely aquainted with his family and had hunted with them on numerous occasions. We had some very good times together. Joe will be greatly missed by those who were close to him.

I also had a call from Romie Falls that Jim Humphreys, Stewarts Draft, VA has passed away. Jim was a member of our Association several years ago. He was very active in the Treeing Tennessee Brindle Breeders Association having bred the Jaggers IV bloodline that he purchased from the Reverend Earl Phillips for more than 30 years. I never got to hunt with Jim but was very well aquainted with him and always enjoyed visiting with him. Jim had spent the last couple of years in a nursing home, suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease. I would ask all of you to join me in keeping the family of these two men in our prayers.

Howard Irvin, Belle Rive, IL has been in the hospital and had surgery. I talked with him a few days ago, he is back at home now and getting around. A little slow, but going. That’s great to hear, buddy. At least you didn’t get beat out of any of your squirrel season. He said he took over four hundred this season. Hope to see you again soon.

Leonard Walker drove down and visited at the 2012 NKC Louisiana State Championship Hunt a short time back. While there he called me and said one of my old friends wanted to say hello. I was really surprised when he put Ronnie Liles on the phone. It had been many years since I’d heard from him. Leonard signed him and about fifteen others into membership on that trip. Way to go, Buddy. I hope that club will post those hunt results, Leonard did get me pictures of the winners which I will enclose with this column.

I talked with Louis Strickland, Oklahoma City, OK who is recuperating from having a vertabre in his neck fused. The first surgery wasn’t too successful and he had to go back in for seconds but says he is doing better now. He said he doubts he can come to Elnora for our Spring Roundup, maybe this fall. He said he didn’t get to hunt at all this past season and that he has a very good young dog. Hopefully this fall will be a different story, buddy.

I have been talking back and forth with Kenneth Shade of Illinois and he has had recent knee replacement surgery and an eye operation. Says things are a little slower than usual but he expects to be back up to par by the time to plant garden. Says the fish aren’t biting very well yet anyway. You take it easy, buddy. I’m looking forward to seeing you at Elnora before this issue comes out.

George Piggle from Michigan called a few days ago and said he is feeling much better. I’m real happy to hear that, buddy, you’ve had a pretty rough time of it. Said he would like to come to Elnora but that’s a pretty long ride. I wish you could, buddy, I’d love to get to visit with you again.

Virgil Price called from his home in Ohio and said his health is pretty good. His wife is suffering from cancer in her leg and can’t get around very well. He is still doing some squirrel hunting but he spends a lot of his time near her helping her in any way he can. I’m sorry to hear that, Virgil, I know how close you two are and I also know how well you like to hunt your squirrel dogs. I used to go up to those guys’ club in Northeast Ohio and see them quite often but I got too old too and can’t travel like I used to. Do keep in touch, buddy.

I also talked to Max Crittenden of Kansas and he is getting around some but rather slow. Another of us with the fringe benefits of senior citizenry, huh buddy? Hang in there, Max, I hope to hear from you or see you again soon.

I talked with Al Mazza of North Carolina and he is really enjoying this warm weather. He had just came in from doing some trap shooting. He and Cliff Uzzle had a very good squirrel season last year. He has laid his dogs up now until the weather cools down again, too many snakes. Don’t blame you, Al.

When Romie Falls called he said he is down to two dogs now. His “old” dog is eight months old but is a barn burner. He has already taken two hundred squirrels over it. His young dog, six months old, he doesn’t know how it will do. He hasn’t had time to fool with it, been too busy with the old dog.

I talked to Danny Wilkinson, Denham Springs, LA a few days ago. He said they had a lot of squirrel this year. They hadn’t had much of a population since Katrina went through there. Danny has a camp up at the Ten Mile Lodge in the Delta National Forest in Mississippi and does quite a bit of hunting there. We talked about the good times we had when we both used to go there to hunt. John L. Moody owned the lodge then and Danny said he is still going strong. I called John L. on his cell phone and didn’t realize it at the time but he was sitting in his boat fishing. During our conversation he said “Hang on there a minute, buddy, I have a big crappie on.” About a minute later he had it landed and we resumed our conversation. He says he fishes seven days a week. We sure played back over some good times during that visit. Danny said he thought maybe next spring he would try to get another competition squirrel hunt set up there.

Scott Johnson called from Pennsylvania and said he had an exceptionally good squirrel season with the Baldwin Feist he got from Danny Williams, Paintsville, KY. He says it is as good a squirrel dog as he has been in the woods with.

You’re a little late in telling me that, Scott. Dick Bare told me last winter how good it was.

I’ve talked to a lot of people these past couple of weeks, trying to get our members renewed for 2012 and to rattle up ads for our 2012 yearbook. I don’t hold the office anymore but Leonard Walker has been about swamped and I’m trying to help him all I can. I was so proud of the color yearbook we produced last year, I just hope we can increase on its size this year. When you
High Country Trigger at three and a half months old and learning what the woods are all about. Owner Mike Hemelrick, Claysville, PA.

Michael's Banging Tiger won Best Male of Show at the 2012 Louisiana State Championship Bench Show.

CH Ty's Dubble D Oreo, owned by Ty Durbin, won Best Champion and Best Overall of Show at the 2012 Louisiana State Championship Bench Show.

Pat Crenshaw, Linden, TX with Hardwood Rowdy Sugar won Best Female of Show at the 2012 NKC Louisiana State Championship Bench Show.

Busby's Sport, owned by Chris Busby, Leesville, LA won High Scoring NC&FBA Member in the 2012 Louisiana State Championship Squirrel Hunt.

Nickelson's Gator, owned by Butch Beasley, was the 2012 NKC Louisiana State Championship Squirrel Hunt winner.

Roger's Cajun Nosie, owned by Roger Eubanks, won the 2012 NKC Louisiana State Championship Night Hunt.

Gypsy, owned by Phil Holtzclaw, won the 2012 Louisiana State Championship Treeing Contest.
receive this it will be too late to place an ad this year but it won't be too late to renew your membership or sign up new and receive one of them. Our 2012 membership dues are $10 for an individual, $15 for a husband/wife team or $20 for a family. A family membership consists of the husband, wife and all of their children under 18 years old who live at home. There is no formal application for membership, just send all names, your full mailing address, area code and phone number along with pay- ment for same to Leonard Walker, 114 Riner Drive, Old Hickory, TN 37138 and he will hook you up.

I have to close this out, it's only a few days until our spring events at the Elnora Outdoor Club and I have some odds and ends to put together for that. Please keep in touch, phone or letter, I'm about always at home. If you have a picture you're real proud of, send it along with a brief write up and I'll try to get it printed in a future column. Thanks for reading and God bless you. Claude

Bobby and Betty Brooks, Elm Grove, LA hosted the 2012 NKC Louisiana State Championship Event.