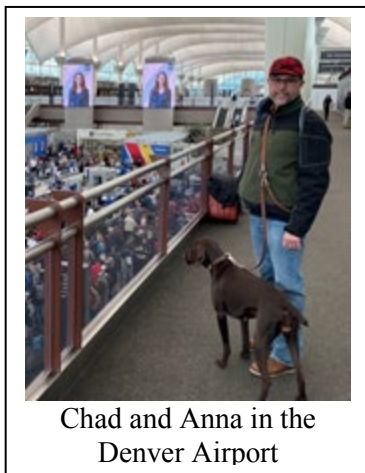


Anna vom Hügel-Hafen

by Chad and Jennifer Kunz

At the 2020 Dr. Kleemann Prüfung there will be not less than four dogs owned by members of the DKGNA. In each of the next four newsletters one of the dogs and their owners will be featured.

In 2016, Chad and I were fortunate to purchase a foundation female, Dakota KS vom Trocken Bach, for our kennel from Frank and Marianne O’Leary. Dakota adapted perfectly into our home and is an outstanding DK. Later that year we had our first vom Hügel-Hafen litter, sired by Joker vom Gänsehimmel. Anna was the only female, so there was no need to deliberate about which pup to keep. As she matured, we could see her potential – her passion, intelligence, and profound love of work. She received a prize 1 as a junior in her Derby in 2017 and in 2018, she achieved a prize 1 in her Solms (in the same weekend that she ran her VGP). Chad had hoped to just pass the VGP, but Anna’s steadfast determination led them to a prize one. Suddenly the Kleeman was truly a possibility. He talked to Frank about possibilities of going to Germany, but Anna needed to complete one more test subject, the VBR. We put the hopes of the Kleeman on the backburner for a while and just enjoyed hunting with her, also having her whelp her first litter in May 2019. She was a wonderful mother. By the time the pups went home to their new owners, Anna was ready to get back to business. In September, Frank connected Chad with Leader Hubertus Krieger, and the door to the Kleeman had opened.



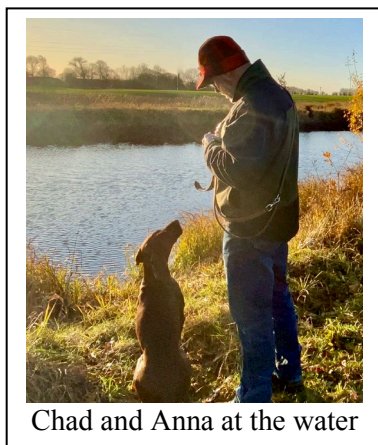
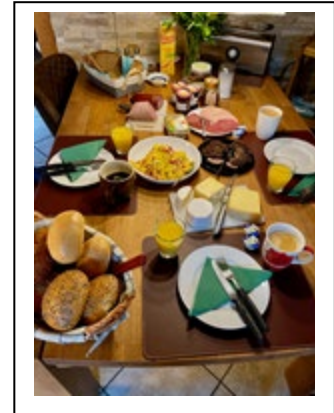
Chad and Anna in the
Denver Airport

After many trip preparations (Chad and I had never been to Germany), we arrived in Frankfurt late morning on Thursday, Nov. 27; it had been a long, yet uneventful flight from Denver. The English signage in the airport was good, and with some assistance we picked up Anna in her crate from the oversized baggage area. She had traveled well and of course was excited to see us. After finding an area outside to let her stretch, we made our way to pick up our rental car. We asked the rental car attendant to change the GPS to English and enter in our destination address to ensure we were on the correct route (a good tip from Frank). We made an

(unintentional) extra lap around the airport before we found our exit and then hit the road, with a seven-hour drive ahead of us to Struxdorf. The Autobahn was an experience in itself, very fast just as we had heard; it took all our senses to be on full attention, but traffic flowed smoothly. The countryside was beautiful – green fields with forests everywhere. We arrived at Hubertus’ house at 9:30 p.m. and he welcomed us warmly. He prepared us a wonderful dinner and we became

acquainted, while discussing plans for the next two days. Hubertus speaks English well, so this made communication fairly easy. Anna stretched out on her bed nearby, unaware of her adventures ahead.

On Friday after a good night's rest, Hubertus made us an excellent German breakfast with fresh breads, local cheeses, meats, eggs, and coffee (we are truly missing these breakfasts) and we all sat and enjoyed the food and made better acquaintances. Hubertus had to go into work for a couple hours, so Chad and I ventured to nearby Schleiswig to tour a bit and we saw a beautiful castle, Schloss Gottorf. We returned in the early afternoon and rode with Hubertus to grounds for Anna to demonstrate her water work. The weather was much better than that of North Dakota! It turned out to be a sunny day with temps in the upper 30's with a slight breeze. There was a retriever test going on by some acquaintances of



Chad and Anna at the water

Hubertus', so that was interesting and fun to watch, as well as nice to meet them. After they finished, Anna was ready to go and use up some energy. Chad sent her on the retrieve and she flew into the water and swam across to the other bank and searched for the duck. Hubertus reported that she has a lot of passion! It was fun to get her out and just watch what Anna does. After a couple more retrieves, Chad put her up and Hubertus brought out his DK, Pit KS vom Osterberg (Pete). We enjoyed watching how he worked with him, and Pit did a very fine job.

It was getting late, and the sun starting to set, so we headed back to the house and got ready to go out for dinner. Hubertus took us to the beautiful Fährhaus Missunde, which is a restaurant and marina right next to the Schlei River. This was originally a grand ferry house and over 200 years old. Today a ferry still carries vehicles across the river.

Saturday arrived and again, we enjoyed a wonderful German breakfast. Chad and I were anticipating the day, as we were going along with Hubertus on an annual driven hunt that he has been attending for the last 27 years. The meeting place was the castle Gut Ludwigsburg, next to the Baltic Sea.



Jennifer at castle Gut Ludwigsburg

We arrived at the beautiful grounds around 9:30 a.m. and entered the restaurant for coffee, tea, and conversations of the hunt. Around 10:30, the group of about 20 hunters started to gather outside and await instructions. Maps were also distributed for safety, so everyone knew where each high seat (stand) and hunter would be. Here we met Pauli, the owner of the grounds and the hunting land. He is 90 years old and spoke some English, it was a nice visit and he had many questions about farming in North Dakota.



Jennifer, Chad, and Hubertus in the deer stand

We loaded up and drove with Hubertus to his spot, and we climbed up onto the open hay trailer and settled in with the gear. The hunt started at 11 a.m. After a short time, Hubertus took his DK Pit to the edge of the forest and sent him on to move game out of the trees. Soon after, we saw two nice sika bucks and after another 15 minutes we heard him barking. When Hubertus returned, he said that Pit was probably on wild boar. There were also men drivers in the forest nearby. Pit was gone for over an hour as

Hubertus expected, and quietly came back to our stand, then Hubertus told him to lie down and stay. Here many things came to mind about the purpose of the independent forest search in the VGP, and the behavior during the driven hunt. It made more sense now, seeing it in true form. We heard many shots and saw a lot of game, including roe deer, in the distance. We had two groups of dam deer come through our area, but offered no clean shots. We enjoyed the beautiful weather and plenty of action to pass the time.

At exactly 2 p.m., all hunting stopped and shortly after arriving back at the castle we heard of a hunter that needed Hubertus and Pit to track a wounded deer. We drove to the area and after a short walk to where the deer was last known to be, Hubertus and Pit went to work. In short time, Pit was on track and heading deeper into the forest with Hubertus. They disappeared from sight, but we heard Pit bark and we knew he was in contact with the deer. We started walking with the hunter to an edge of the forest and a few moments later, Chad thought he heard Hubertus call his name. I could not decipher it, but we stopped and heard him call again. He shouted back if he was in need. Hubertus answered, “Chad... I need help, come quickly!”

In Chad’s words, “I took off running in that direction, trying to watch my step and not trip on the dead fall. About half-way there I came to a spot that looked very muddy. I thought to myself, I am going to get muddy, but if I jump through it

maybe it won't be so bad. So I did, and to my big surprise I sunk into a peat moss bog over my waist and could not feel a bottom! I remember hearing once that you should not struggle, but instead stretch out and make the most surface area to avoid sinking any faster. After what seemed like a very long time, I was able to pull myself out and go finish what I set out to do, help Hubertus and Pit. By this time, after a struggle and Pit working to hold the buck, Hubertus had been able to dispatch the deer with a well-placed knife into the chest of the deer. I helped Hubertus drag the deer back, and as we approached the bog he explained how dangerous it was, that many animals enter and never escape." I had made my way to the edge of it with the hunter, and I was quite shocked to hear Hubertus telling this to Chad. I had saw him drop into it, but thought it was just mud when I saw him climb out. This had been a deer track never to be forgotten!

We went back to the castle and warmed up. The staff had prepared soup, bread and hot drinks. Now we waited for the ceremony to celebrate the hunt. The hunters visited about the day while the game was brought to the courtyard. We all went outside and the animals had been laid out in a respectful, orderly fashion in the middle of the square, with bows of evergreens carefully lining the area. Everyone gathered around, owners on one side, hunters on another, and drivers on another. A speech was given which recapped the hunt and Hubertus translated for us - the total of animals taken was 112! After the speech, five people played the hunters trumpets. Hubertus later explained for us that every song was a different hunting



signal (Jagdsignal) for each species and a final tribute to the wild game. It is called 'the track fades' (die Strecke verblassen). For every kind of wild game there is a special song... for dam deer, sika deer, roe deer, foxes, hares, etc. Many years ago, when the hunters hunted together, they were far apart and communicated with the horns. Even the dogs knew their signal. One signal means everyone comes to eat, another the driver starts, etc. It was the language of the hunters.

The entire ceremony was very moving and humbling - we were grateful to be a part of it.

Back inside, we then waited for the meal. Livers of the deer had been saved and prepared, and we enjoyed conversation over a couple of very good German beers. Dinner was served with a nice presentation of liver, cooked onions, a single slice

of apple, applesauce, and mashed potatoes. After the meal more speeches were given with honors to the hunters and good cheer.

The next day (Sunday) arrived too soon, although we felt we had experienced so much in the short time we were there. Hubertus had never seemed to tire of our seemingly endless questions about the region, culture, hunting, and traditions. Chad and I departed with much gratitude for all of his hospitality, but also sadness to leave our Anna. We know we've entrusted her in very good hands and she will thrive with all the adventures to come. As we wrote this, we just heard from Hubertus that she completed a successful VBR and the judge was very happy with her work in difficult conditions. We are excited for the Kleeman, and to see their teamwork in action!