

IWCA 2015 Officer Candidates Biographies

President

Birgitta Stolpe PhD – Barrington

I am honored to accept the nomination for president of the IWCA. Over the past three years serving on the Board of Directors, first as a Vice President and then as a Director, I have participated in many of our accomplishments. We now have a beautiful new Harp and Hound which arrives on time, four times per year. Kudos to the Editorial Board which has done such a great job. We also have an exceptional new website which is kept up to date with news and information and is accessible to everyone yet offers a member's only section for club business. The Internet Committee has worked its magic to assure that the IWCA now appears within the first few hits on a Google search of Irish Wolfhounds. The importance of this cannot be overstated as the Internet is now the dominant means by which the public searches for information on breeds or to find a puppy.

During my tenure as Chair of the Governance Committee I have been tasked with updating the IWCA Bylaws in order to bring the club up to date with rapidly changing technologies while remaining consistent with evolving AKC policies. The Committee has listened attentively to the concerns of the membership and is now in the final stage of the revisions process. I hope to oversee the completion of this important job during my term as president.

As an IWCA member for the past fifteen years, I have made many friends and continue to be awed by the beauty and nobility of our hounds. If elected, I commit to the continued smooth operation of our club, to meeting as many other members as possible, and to completing our highest priority projects.

Vice Presidents

Beth Chastain MD – Brie Irish Wolfhounds

My mom, Debbie Chastain, got her first Irish Wolfhound when I was just a year old so I can't recall what life is like without an IW and hopefully, I never will! In the 34 years since that first IW arrived we've raised seven litters, the youngest of which will be hitting the show ring in the summer of 2015. Even with this limited breeding program we're very fortunate and proud of our accomplishments thus far, including producing the first IW to reach the title of LCM3 (Padraic Brie Eleanor), the sire (Ch. Brie All Eyes on Me) of Jill Bregy's multiple BISS winning Ch. Wildisle Spicemate Charmer and our current all-breed multiple group and RBIS winning special, Ch. Wildisle Brie Andromeda. When not in the conformation ring at specialties you can usually find me in the health tent helping with EKGs and drawing blood for genetic studies as I find the health of our beloved breed vital to continue successful breeding programs and increasing longevity.

I have completed a decade of medical training and hold the position of Assistant Professor of Pathology at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, MS. I'm quadruple board certified in anatomic pathology, clinical pathology, hematopathology and molecular genetic pathology and have taken additional specialized courses in laboratory management. In addition to my clinical duties determining patient diagnoses I am responsible for educating dental students, medical students, pathology residents and fellows. My education will help with my intense interest in health education and support my wolfhound addiction.

It would be my great pleasure to serve as a Vice President on the Board of the Irish Wolfhound Club of America with the aim of working alongside others to protect our magnificent dogs.

Sue Marvin

Most everyone knows me as Sue and I've been involved with Irish Wolfhounds for 20+ years. My love for the breed began when I was quite young and I found myself migrating to their gentle nature. After researching and spending as much time with them as I could, I was fortunate enough to finally include one into my household and I've never looked back.

I have happily served the breed for many years in diversified capacities, most recently as a Vice President for the IWCA. In the past, as President of the Desert Irish Wolfhound Association. I also was elected to the Board of Directors of the Irish Wolfhound Association of the West Coast for two terms. During this time I enjoyed being the Silent Auction chair. I was honored to judge Sweeps at the Western Hound Association shows. The friendships I have formed over the years with other IW lovers have been invaluable to me. I cherish the knowledge they have shared.

I have worked as a Veterinary Technician, Receptionist and currently, Practice Manager for a multi doctor practice in Scottsdale, AZ.

While my life has been dedicated to working with all animals, my passion is the Irish Wolfhound. I am an avid Handler/Show person and have successfully achieved Championships, not only on my own IW's but for others as well. I am not a breeder but have the utmost respect for those who breed within the IWCA guidelines. I believe in the need for education and the benefit of research dealing with the health issues that affect our breed. My knowledge is ever growing and respectfully, I would be proud to serve on the board of the IWCA, once again.

Melanie Mercer DVM CCRT – Wyvern

I acquired my first wolfhound in 1989, the same year I graduated from the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Missouri. Since that time, I have participated in AKC conformation events as well as in ASFA, LGRA, NOTRA and NOFCA performance events. I have bred 3 litters of wolfhounds, and 2 of salukis, using the kennel name Wyvern. I am a practicing veterinarian in Dallas, having moved here about 12 years ago and am a Certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist.

I am currently very active in purebred rescue for all sighthound breeds, and have been intimately involved in the ongoing Texas IW rescue situation, by providing housing for several of the dogs and performing veterinary procedures where necessary. I am also on the Board of Directors of Open Door Animal Sanctuary, one of the largest no-kill shelters in the US. I hope to be of service to the IWCA, in part by working to streamline the process of rescue in the unfortunate event we ever again have such a large number of dogs to place.

Margie Milne – Wideview

My husband, David, and I have owned Irish Wolfhounds since 1977 but only males and have never bred. Our first IW was a rescue followed shortly after with our first 'show' dog. We have both been involved in Irish Wolfhounds ever since.

With almost 30 years as an engineer, many spent doing project management, I am detail oriented and comfortable with computers. I have a strong background in art. My interests include the back-office work of self-superintended shows such as producing the IWADV catalog for 33 years. I am familiar with the running of many kinds of dog events: conformation, obedience, lure coursing and straight track trials (and a few agility trials as well).

I have also worked on or co-chaired public education such as the Canine Learning Experience and AKC Meet the Breeds. I donate my time as webmaster for IWADV and set up the initial IWF website. Through the years I have contributed artwork for the various auctions, raffles and sales as well as designing many of the IWCA National Show logos.

I belong to the IWADV serving as President, Vice President & Director in addition to various chair positions. I've been on the board for CNJHA (our local hound association), and a Borzoi Regional club. I have just finished a six year term as President of a large art organization as well as chair of our annual juried art show. I previously served a three year term as Director on the board of the IWCA. While on the site selection committee I believe we helped steer the IWCA into being a more nation wide organization. I think the recognition of performance events is much stronger than many years ago but would like to see even more support.

Jennifer Sula

Thanks to my animal loving parents, I learned how to walk holding onto their first hound, Moore of Killybracken. And these dogs have been a part of my life ever since. Our household never went without a hound (or three or four) as cherished family companions. Sometime in the late 1990's I was introduced to the world of dog shows. I will never forget my first specialty. What could be better than being surrounded by a sea of wolfhounds? I was hooked. But it is the day to day life with my hounds that I enjoy the most.

As a veterinarian and partner in a busy mixed animal practice, the days are never dull. My time is split between equine farm calls and small animal medicine and surgery. Equine lameness, internal medicine, and client education and outreach are a few of my special interests.

My greatest strength on the board of the IWCA, would be using my veterinary knowledge in the health and research aspects of the club. However, I believe my business and communication skills will allow me to be a thoughtful and strong advocate for the betterment of the Irish Wolfhound on many levels.

Respectfully,
Jen Sula

Secretary

A. I. (Nina) Gottsch – Ianina's

It's that time; Elections! And once again, I offer my services as Secretary for the IWCA.

I am very pleased to have been able to get the minutes and other information to you in a timely manner and I hope you have found them to be informational and satisfactory.

We've gotten a lot done this past year. I have been privileged to be on a Board that has made steady progress toward improving all aspects of the club for the members and the hounds.

I have assisted, in both large and small ways toward, the binding of the Harp & Hounds, the resurrection of the Breeder and Contact lists, the inventory of club assets, the publishing of past yearbooks, the new website, conference-call Board meetings, the new Harp & Hound, and streamlining many small housekeeping tasks to help reduce and organize the Board's workload.

I look forward to assisting in finalizing work that is still in progress such as By-Law revisions, localizing club assets, the inventory and organization of the archives. I also have couple new projects I would like to present to the Board for review this upcoming year.

There have been a lot of changes this year and although change is not always easy, it is an inevitable thing. I believe that this Board has taken charge of the changes we need to make, instead of falling behind and allowing change to take charge of us.

Your Board of Directors is doing our best to serve the hounds and the membership and I hope you find our efforts have served you well.

I am always available for questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

ianinas@tds.net
402-715-5354

Treasurer

Roni Kaluza - Hounds of the Sidhe

Many of you know me from my 40 years of owning, exhibiting and breeding IWS, and more recently from my judging.

My past IWCA work has included serving on the board of directors and serving as membership chairperson. Also, when an unanticipated departure of the Harp and Hound editor left the club in the lurch, I filled that position for several issues until a permanent editor could be appointed.

Since becoming club treasurer, I have tried very hard to be sure all transactions are timely and responsive, and I hope that members and the committees that work with me are satisfied with the results. I have also worked with the website committee to make PayPal available for more club transactions, and judging from the participation, this is a move that is popular with members.

I firmly believe in term limits, so will not continue as treasurer for many more years, but as long as I continue to be re-elected, will work hard and do my best for the club.

Directors – Class of 2018

Frances Abrams – Tailstorm

I got my first wolfhound in 1975 as a graduation present to myself. Since then there has always been at least one Irish Wolfhound in my house. Currently I have six Irish Wolfhounds, aged 10 months to 10 years. While I have titled dogs in conformation, lure coursing and obedience, my wolfhounds are primarily my companions. They take me for a walk twice a day, regardless of weather, and remind me when it is time for meals. I even bred a litter once.

I attended my first IWCA Specialty in 1977, the same year I became a member. This is my second stint on the IWCA Board. It took some convincing but it has actually been fun since I retired.

I've always been interested in the health and welfare of my companions and I am on the Board of the Irish Wolfhound Foundation, handling a lot of the administrative functions of the Research Committee. I believe that the IWF and the IWCA both have an important role in fostering the health of our breed. I'm also a licensed All-Breed Lure Coursing judge for both ASFA and AKC so I spend a lot of weekends watching dogs run around, for the fun of it.

In the past three years I have chaired the Nomination Committee for the IWCA, chaired the Health Committee, helped organize the health portion of the website, and taken over the job of getting out the 5 yearbooks (2009-2013) that were left to be completed. The Health Committee has taken an active role in funding research through the Canine Health Foundation Donor Advised Fund.

I hope everyone has fun in Colorado and remembers that the best dog there is the one they take home with them. Hug your hounds!

Ellen Kroll - August

Who is this person? Professionally, I have been a veterinary technician in all levels of veterinary practice including large and small animal, specialty practices and cancer research. In addition, I started teaching in 1980, both at the college and high school level. I designed and taught a veterinary assisting program here in Washington state that is still going strong today. I currently run my husband's business in anesthesia services.

I have been a lover of Wolfhounds since my first companion in 1977. My husband Jim and I have bred Wolfhounds on a very small scale since 1990. A few years ago, I completed my requirements for my judging license and have really enjoyed my assignments both here and in Europe.

I am an active member of several dog clubs; the regional Wolfhound clubs, an all hound club and an all breed club. Jim and I have had the opportunity to give back to these clubs that have sponsored so many great events that we have benefited from. I believe the experience of being a board member of these clubs has really prepared me to work with diverse individuals to accomplish goals for the IWCA. Maturity (HA HA!! getting old!) leaves me with an appreciation of taking one step at a time and building on it. National organizations are tough to manage, but I still believe positive steps can happen.

My own passion is education and I hope to be able to continue to work with others on providing excellent education opportunities for breeders, owners and judges.

Joseph Roland – R Noble Irish Wolfhounds

My first experience with Irish Wolfhounds was around 1980 when my father rescued a male here in Pennsylvania. From that moment till present, I have been fortunate to share my life with this noble breed. Today, I am writing in hopes our national membership will support me so I can continue working for you and most importantly our hounds by serving on the board. This past year I have served as vice president and found the experience challenging and fulfilling. I believe our board accomplished a lot this past year and have worked together in spirit to reach our goals.

Previously I have served my regional club, IWADV, as a board member, vice president and president. I have served the IWADV numerous times as match show chairman. I also serve on the grounds committee for the IWADV specialty each year and served on the grounds committee in the past when our national was held in Carlisle, PA and also in Columbia, SC. I was honored to judge the PVIWC sweeps entry in 2009 and in 2012 the IWCA allowed me the great honor to judge sweeps at our national specialty. Currently I am a supervisor at Carpenter Technology Corp. in the Vacuum Melting Department. I have been with this company for 37 years.

It is my hope we all can work together to make certain this breed grows stronger in all aspects of health, temperament and conformation. It is our responsibility to leave this breed better than we found it. Thank you for supporting me in 2014 and thanks again for considering me for another term.

Respectfully, Joseph Roland

Mary Ellen Shriver - Eirian

I have enjoyed being part of the Irish Wolfhound Club of America's Board of Directors. I always wondered why the meetings were so long and now understand how much thought and consideration goes into the many items of business brought before the club officers.

I have owned various breeds of sighthounds but finally fell in love with my first Irish Wolfhound and have lived and worked with this magnificent breed since the 1980's. The hounds and I participate in specialties, lure coursing, and obedience events. My entire family joins in the rearing of puppies and handling the adults at socializing venues. They are so much a part of my life that my children ask for a monthly itinerary so our family gatherings can be incorporated into the wolfhounds' busy schedule.

I would like to continue to act on the board of directors for the Irish Wolfhound Club of America.

Thank you

Mary Ellen Shriver

AKC Delegate**Eugenia Hunter – Ironwood**

Irish Wolfhounds came into my life in 1964 when I married Robert Hunter (author/illustrator of "Grooming and Showing an Irish Wolfhound"). He had been given an Eaglescrag puppy in 1961, by English friends. We owned, bred and showed a number of Irish Wolfhounds to championships and group placements from the late 1960's to the mid 1980's. Since then we have had many wonderful Irish Wolfhounds companions.

I have been a member of the IWCA since 1968 and during this time have served as President, Vice-President, Director and Delegate to the AKC. I was a founding member of Locust Grove Irish Wolfhound Association and am Vice-Chair for the annual match. I am currently a Director of the Irish Wolfhound Foundation and Treasurer of the Humane Society of Southern Illinois/SPCA and a member of two all-breed kennel clubs: Mississippi Valley and Nashville.

During my tenure as AKC Delegate my goal is to faithfully represent the interest of the IWCA, the hobby breeder, the owner-handler, and the welfare of our breed, by attending all of the delegate's meetings, Parent Club Committee meetings and other relevant committee meetings. I report these meetings to the board in writing and am always open to communication from the membership regarding AKC issues.

As a practicing attorney familiar with corporate and tax issues, I use my knowledge in these areas for the benefit of the IWCA. During my previous tenure as AKC Delegate I was selected to be a participant in the AKC Parent Club Conference and was able to bring a number of innovations to the club. At this time I do not breed, exhibit or judge and have nothing personal to gain from my service to the club, except for the preservation of the breed that I adore and the sport.