



Rat Tails



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE IRISH WATER SPANIEL CLUB OF AMERICA
September/October 2026 Edition



Grouse & Máin Dockside
Photo by Sarah Zumpf

CHARITABLE SUPPORT MEANS TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR YOU. HELP US HELP OUR DOGS. IWSCA IS A 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.

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President's Message

IWSCA
MEMBER SURVEY

**WE
HEARD
YOU.**

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE
WHO SHARED THEIR
THOUGHTS.

You told us what matters:
preserving our remarkable breed,
building a stronger community,
sharing knowledge, welcoming
the next generation, and
celebrating all things IWS.



Officers, Committee Chairs, Regional Representatives

(Contact Information can be found on <https://iwsca.org/board>)

IWSCA Board of Directors

President
Bethany Urban

1st Vice President
Timothy Gulley

2nd Vice President
Open

Corresponding Secretary
Edith Blackwell

Recording Secretary
Tim Ufkes

Treasurer
Shona Ensign

Membership Director
Heidi Currier Ferris

Delegate to the AKC
Dan Sayers

IWSCA Committees

Rat Tails Newsletter Editor
Crystal Jordan
jordanjj@att.net

Public Relations and Education
Laurie Jacobs

Rescue Committee
Lisa Schaitberger

Health & Genetics Committee
Laurel Baglia

Breeders Education Committee
Mindy Garbarino, Greg Siner

Webmaster
Sally Lewis

Judges' Education Committee
Stacy Duncan, Michelle Cummings

Field Committee
Heidi Currier Ferris

2027 National Specialty Committee
Stacy Duncan, Michelle Cummings

Regional Representatives

Northeast
Laurel Baglia
Jeremy Kezer

Mid-Atlantic
Tiffany Schuffert

Southeast
Linda Deckard

Midwest
Sarah Zumpf

Southwest
Ellen DeVrieze

Northwest
Open

International
Charlene Schermers



FROM YOUR BOARD

Nominating Committee Letter

Dear IWSCA Members,

According to the IWSCA By-Laws, the Board must appoint a nominating committee for Board Officers and Directors seats up for election for the club year 2027/2028.

The committee of five must be composed of members in good standing from at least three club regions (NE, Mid Atlantic, SE, Midwest, NW, SW and International). Current members of the IWSCA Board of Directors and Officers may not serve.

As of September 15, 2026 the 2027 nominating committee was seated. The Committee shall include Hannah Loonsk, Michelle Cummings, Gregory Siner, Mindy Garbarino, and Charlene Schermers. The Committee will be chaired by Hannah Loonsk.

Thank you very much for volunteering! The Nominating Committee must submit the list of candidates to the Recording Secretary on or before December 31st in accordance with our By-Laws.

The vacant seats up for election for 2027/2028 are:

v 2nd Vice President

v Membership Director

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any Board member.

Thank you!

Sally Lewis

IWSCA Recording Secretary



June, July, August Board Minutes

Submitted by Sally Lewis

Board Meeting Tuesday June 16, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM PST

Attending were board members Tim Gulley, Dan Sayers, Heidi Currier Ferris, Bethany Urban, Edith Blackwell, Shona Ensign, and Sally Lewis

Guests were Jeffrey Keyton, Pam Manus, Angus Zuklie, Michelle Cummings and Stacy Duncan.

Strategic Planning

Pam Manus discussed the importance of Strategic Planning emphasizing the Mission for our club:

- Preservation (of our breed)
- Education (about our breed)
- Celebration (with our breed)

Jeffrey Keyton suggested that we simplify our messaging and make it memorable.

Angus Zuklie has been working on a first draft of the IWSCA Strategic Planning Questionnaire for club members. We can review his draft and comment. The goal is to have the first feedback cycle completed by the end of June.

What we hope to learn:

- Strengths of the club today
- Challenges limiting growth or participation
- Opportunities for modernization
- Member engagement priorities
- Long-term goals for the club

We are aiming for IWSCA Club member's input now.

Jeffrey suggested collaboration with other rare breed clubs to see how they may be tackling declining membership.

He also suggested putting a time/deadline for filling out the survey.

Bottom line, the survey goal is preserving the breed.

Edith said we need to educate the membership on the 501- C3 requirements.

Tim made a motion to go forward with the questionnaire as it stands. Edith suggested more editing particularly adding 501 c3 verbiage.

Heidi suggested the bottom line is remaining relevant to members. Do you feel important to the club?

Jeffrey suggested strategizing the world of social media/website/etc.



2027 Specialty – Stacy Duncan and Michelle Cummings

The location in South Sioux City, Nebraska has done a complete facelift since we were there in 2017. It is now The South Sioux City Marrio Riverfront.

Our contract is in place for the location. Michelle and Stacy will be doing a site visit in mid-July.

The regional and National judges are under contract. They still have to find Junior judge. They considered scentwork but need to make it more profitable in order to offer it.

The 2027 Committee

- Tim Gulley and Lois MacDonald – Obedience and Rally
- Sally Lewis and Sarah Zumph – Agility
- Hannah Loonsk – WC/WCX and possibly WD/WDX
- Sally Lewis Logo
- Shellie Lewis and Jodi Lamp -- Merchandise
- There will be a new person for the catalog.

The committee is looking for fundraising ideas.

The more we can accomplish on the front end the less crazy it will be on the back end.

Shona brought up that she needs to set up the specialty financial apparatus ASAP. She will set up a debit card for Specialty expenses.

Investco Account

We need new signers on the Investco Account. Bethany Urban proposed that we add Bethany Urban, Timothy Gulley and Shona Ensign as signers.

Edith Blackwell moved to get the corporate resolution for signing authority notarized. Sally Lewis seconded it. The ayes carried it.

AKC Canine College

Is for judging.

Select only 2 locations per year. 2026 Colorado and Florida. They are not near any current owners.

They have a film crew. We could send someone. We would need to get IWS to them but none of the available events are convenient for us this year. We would need to get dogs to them. We don't need to spend a lot of time on it this year.

Next year's location not announced yet.

Awards Committee

Board needs to address Stephanie and Missy's complaints. Stephanie was not aware of changes in awards program during Awards Ceremony. After a number of soft bounces of emails, StarChapter stops sending emails.



Missy also has had email troubles and was not aware of changes. She didn't feel that Obedience/Rally should be awarded to the exclusion of other sports. Now only obedience/rally and field have #1 in our breed award.

Laurel had some communication issues with some of Stephanie's Agility titles so they weren't included in slideshow.

Due to 501C3 mission discipline all sports were dropped except Field, Rally and Obedience from the awards ceremony which Stephanie and Missy did not agree with.

The bounced emails include approximately 10 people. They start out as "so bounces" that cannot be delivered for some reason such as a firewall. After a prescribed number of failures they are not sent the emails anymore until it is addressed. Some members do opt out of emails.

Tim requested that Sally and Angus investigate bounced emails and fix the problem before we send Strategic Plan information.

New Members

New members were approved by the board:

Tetitia (Tish) King and Cecilia (Ceci) King
Bethesda, Maryland
Endorsed by Melissa McMunn and Kathleen Fitzpatrick

Amber Bach-Gorman
West Fargo, North Dakota
Endorsed by Sarah Zumpf and Heidi Ferris

Bonnie Jangula
Fargo, North Dakota
Endorsed by Sarah Zumpf and Heidi Ferris

Lois and Kyle Eid
West Fargo, North Dakota
Endorsed by Sarah Zumpf and Heidi Ferris

LouAnn Honek
Fargo, North Dakota
Endorsed by Sarah Zumpf and Heidi Ferris

Nicole Dauk-Holmes
West Fargo, North Dakota
Endorsed by Sarah Zumpf and Heidi Ferris

New Board Member

We are in need of a new 2nd VP to fill out the current term. The board will give some thought to who it will be and discuss at next meeting.

Discussion of AKC



Pam commented that Gina DiNardo is bringing change to AKC with a new improved attitude.

ESPN is televising more sanctioned dog events such as Agility and Dock Diving. The Delegates are working to come together on a path forward.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be July 14, 2026.

Tim moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 PM Pacific Time. Shona seconded it and the meeting was adjourned.

Board Meeting Tuesday July 14, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM PST

Attending were board members Tim Gulley, Dan Sayers, Heidi Currier Ferris, Bethany Urban, Edith Blackwell, Shona Ensign, and Sally Lewis

Guests were Crystal Jordan, Kim Kezer, Laurel Baglia, Michelle Cummings and Stacy Duncan.

Newsletter

Crystal Jordan joined the meeting to introduce herself. She is committed to publishing the Newsletter 6 times a year. Since Jim Brennan died past the deadline for the July/August issue there will be a proper obituary for him in the next issue.

Awards Committee

Kim Kezer and Laurel Baglia. Kim is transitioning out of her role on the Awards Committee. She is still working to get historical data online. Angus Zuklie is helping her complete this project.

Kim suggested that the Outreach Program go to another committee.

There was a discussion of streamlining the awards and if we should reconsider some individual awards. Since we are a 501c(3) awarding individuals is not meeting the objective. Instead, it is about Education, Preventing Cruelty to Animals, and Health and Genetics.

2027 Specialty

Stacy Duncan and Michelle Cummings visited the specialty site in South Sioux City, Nebraska. They reported that the conference center is very beautiful. There is a kitchen in the center for food preparation so catered food does not have to come from somewhere else.

Due to time restrictions for the specialty week, the Scent Work trial and the Agility trial will be held at the same time on Monday, May 3rd. Agility will be held in Omaha and Scent Work will be held at the Specialty Site in South Sioux City.

There was a brief discussion of the potential to standardize our specialties, perhaps consolidating locations to a few repeating venues.

Delegates Report

Dan Sayers spoke briefly about AKC which issued a report on expenditures and revenues. AKC stressed that members should get to know our local legislature.

New Members



The following new members were approved by the board:

Greg and Lisa Kealey
Cody, Wyoming
Endorsed by Heidi Ferris and Dan Sayers

Membership Survey

The board approved the membership survey. There will be an email as well as a Facebook post and a link on the IWSCA.org homepage.

Next Meeting

Our next board meeting will be August 11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM Pacific Time.

Board Meeting Tuesday August 11, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM PST

Attending were board members Tim Gulley, Dan Sayers, Heidi Currier Ferris, Bethany Urban, Edith Blackwell, Shona Ensign, and Sally Lewis

2027 Specialty

The specialty is on track. The first Specialty meeting is September 3.

Health and Genetics

Tim Gulley reported that Jim Rubin is organizing a new Health and Genetics committee

Delegates Report

Dan Sayers spoke about archiving win photos from our events. We do not have a policy in place and the committee agrees we should consider it.

Finance Report

Shona Ensign will be adding Tim Gulley to the Wells Fargo Account. Shona reported that the process is very slow with the bank.

Field Report

Heidi Currier discussed the cost of Hunt Tests. Birds can fly in different directions so the costs can vary and the organizer will need to buy extra birds. Susan Saracino only made \$47 on her event.

New Members

The following new member was approved by the board:

Tiffany Anderson
Pinellas Park, Florida
Endorsed by Tiffany Schuffert and Emily Pikul

Lisa Shaw renewed her membership after a hiatus.



Maryland Sporting Dog

This will be a designated specialty and supported entry.

Newsletter

Edith Blackwell is assisting Crystal Jordon with learning the ropes.

Membership Survey

There were 51 responses to the membership survey. We have yet to get analysis of the responses.

Nominating Committee

Sally Lewis will be sending out a request for volunteers. This needs to be done ASAP.

Awards Committee

Heidi will revise the awards list.

Volunteer hours tracking is beyond the scope of the Awards Committee and should be handled separately.

New Business

Tim Gully is asking for Bethany Urban and Greg Siner to put together a presentation for the 2028 Specialty.

Next Meeting

Our next board meeting will be September 8. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM Pacific Time.



Upcoming Events

Please join us for a wonderful gathering of the clan!

RATTAIL DAYS 2026

10:00 AM Meet & Greet with Coffee/Pastries

10:30 AM Introduction to Scent Work with Laurel Baglia

NOON Annual Match Show judged by Stephanie O'Reilly

A class for every dog, young or old, with or without hair!

To Follow Buffet BBQ Lunch Compliments of Rattail Days & Silent Auction

**Bring your chairs
& any donations
for the silent
auction!**

Rain or Shine!

Tuckertown Park Pavillion

South Kingstown, RI

Saturday, October 24th



Rattail Days



2027 American Spaniel Club Flushing Spaniel Show

Marriot Meadowview
Conference Resort

January 8-10, 2027
Kingsport, TN

Friday, January 8th

ASC Puppy Extravaganza
\$50 Prize for Puppy Breed
Winner, \$1,000 Grand Prize

IWSCA Southeast
Regional Specialty
Judge Pluis Davern

Saturday, January 9th

ASC Breed Classes
Obedience/Rally
Judge Dianne Kepley

Sunday, January 10th

ASC Best of Breed / BOBOH
Obedience/Rally

Flushing Spaniel Variety Groups
NOHS Extravaganza

\$50 for OHBOB, \$1,000 Grand Prize

Join us for an action-packed weekend
as this historic show
brings its charm to a new venue!
Two great opportunities for points, as
well as **beautiful ribbons**
and **cash prizes!**



GROOMING WITH A PURPOSE
IWSCA 2027 NATIONAL SPECIALTY FUNDRAISER

Quality grooming tools designed especially for the IWSCA 2027 National Specialty.

Custom Brush by Ashley Craig
 20mm or 27mm polished pins
 Starting at **\$49.95**

Greyhound Comb
 Medium Coarse/Fine
 Choice of Colors
\$44.00

A portion of every purchase benefits the IWSCA 2027 National Specialty.
 See links below to order.

IWSCA 2027 National Specialty
 South Sioux City, Nebraska

Brush Link: <https://greyhoundcomb.com/product/37006/>

Comb Link: <https://greyhoundcomb.com/product/irish-water-spaniel-club-of-america-greyhound-comb-fundraiser/>



Photos from 2026 National Specialty



RESERVE WINNERS DOG Poole's Ide Prince
Of Wawayanda FTI



RESERVE WINNERS BITCH Landacre's
Feeling Groovy



BEST STUD DOG CGH Poole's Ide
Riptide RI DS CGC WC



BEST BROOD BITCH GCH Poole's Ide On My
Mind CD RI JH DS CGC WCX



BEST IN GUNDOG SWEEPSTAKES Hooligan N
Epik's Absurd Little Bird CGCA TKN WD ATT SCN
ACT1 ACT1J JHU



**BEST OF OPPOSITE IN GUNDOG
SWEEPSTAKES** GCH Poole's Ide Dark
Knight ATT CGC TKN WD









**BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX IN VETERAN
SWEEPSTAKES** GCHG MACH2 PACH2 Poole's Ide Sergeant
Sloane CD RE MXG MJG MXP6 MXPS MSP5 MJPS PAX2
MFB T2B2



Public Relations and Education

Share a Dog, Lend a Hand, Make a Difference

Sometimes volunteering for IWSCA looks like this.

Josie, (*Tiffany Schuffert*) and her friend Finn, (*Ann McNeill*,) spent time at the Pittsburgh Irish Festival doing what Irish Water Spaniels do so well: meeting people, making friends and introducing visitors to a breed many of them may never have met before. And judging by the photos, the dogs were having every bit as much fun as the people.

But volunteering doesn't always come with a leash attached.

Sometimes it's setting up and tearing down an agility course at the Specialty. Helping ringside. Pitching in at the hospitality room. Taking photos. Sometimes it's helping with an Irish Festival, a parade or a Meet the Breeds. Sometimes it's working quietly behind the scenes on things most members never even see.

Or it can be as simple as seeing something that needs to be done and saying, "I can help with that."

We need all of it. And we need to hear about it.



Josie at the Pittsburgh Irish Festival
Photo by Tiffany Schuffert



We want to do a better job of recognizing the people who are already giving their time to IWSCA, but we also want to show other members just how many different ways there are to get involved. If you're out there sharing your IWS with the public, helping at an event or quietly doing something behind the scenes, please tell us about it. And if someone happened to get a picture along the way, we'd enjoy seeing that too.



And if you haven't volunteered before, maybe this is the year to give it a try. It doesn't have to be a huge commitment or an official IWSCA event. Take your IWS to visit a nursing home. Visit a school with your dog and read a book with the children. Let your dog be Show & Tell at your child's school. Bring your dog to a local community event. Help out for an hour at the Specialty. Or volunteer for one of those little jobs that always needs another pair of hands.

There are probably dozens of ways to share our dogs, help our club and introduce people to the Irish Water Spaniel that we haven't even thought of yet.

Tell us what you're doing. And if you haven't started yet, maybe you'll be the next person to say, "I can do that."



Rescue Update

Lisa Schaitberger & Bethany Urban
IWS Rescue

Lisa received a rescue notification on September 8. Rescue contacted the shelter, they identified the dog as a poodle, but it had some IWS characteristics. The shelter was called, and a request was made for some additional pictures (Especially color, as the photo sent was black and white. I reviewed the photos, and on second look, I do agree with the shelter, the dog is a poodle, or poodle mix. The dog is black, head too snippy, tail not IWS, and size was small. The other factor in my decision was the lack of a microchip, or other permanent identification. I believe most of our breeders do microchip, or tattoo their puppies, and I took that into account.

The shelter itself appears well run with a good reputation. I have sent them some photos of IWS, vs Poodle photos for future ID. They indicated they have two well-qualified families who are interested in adopting this dog.

Given they have interested parties, the dog was not microchipped when brought in, and photo ID rules out the dog being an IWS, we will not be taking this dog into rescue.

Thank you to Missy McMunn for alerting us that there was a post about this dog.

I know I say this a lot.... If you find a posting somewhere about a dog that looks like an IWS, refrain from putting it on your page. Forward the information to rescue and we will reach out. The last thing a shelter needs are 20, 40, 80 good intentioned people calling on one dog. Most are short on staff, have a lot of dogs to care for, clean crates, feed, and deal with injuries or other health issues. Filling their answering machine or inboxes with demands for a single dog makes it difficult for breed rescue to work with the shelter.

So please send Inquiries about IWS in need to me at Bogdogs@gmail.com,

It will get investigated.



Tribute to Lynn Musgrave

Today is my dear friend Lynn Musgrave's birthday.

Lynn died in February 2024, and somehow it feels as though she has been gone much longer. Maybe that's because there have been so many times since then when I've thought *Lynn would have something to say about this.*

And believe me, she would.

Lynn was opinionated, passionate and never particularly interested in sitting quietly when she believed something was wrong. With everything that has happened in Minneapolis, I know exactly where she would have been. She would have been speaking up, posting up a storm, and standing with the people in her city who refused to look the other way.

But that was Lynn. She showed up.



She showed up for Irish Water Spaniels for decades. Her first litter was in 1989, and my very first IWS came from that litter. My third and fourth came from Lynn, too. Had she lived, I'm pretty certain there would have been more. She was one of the finest breeders I knew, and she gave an enormous amount of herself to the IWSCA throughout all those years.

She was also an actress, a sound and set designer, an Oklahoma girl who made Minneapolis her home, and one of the most interesting people you could ever hope to know.

She was Dreadlock's Irish Water Spaniels which later became D'Locks Irish Water Spaniels. Foundations in so many IWS's pedigrees.

But none of those things are why I miss her as much as I do. miss my friend.

Lynn helped me. All the time. When I doubted myself, she reminded me that I shouldn't. When I was headed in the wrong direction, she didn't just stand there and watch me go—she did her best to turn me around and point me the other way. And when I needed someone in my corner, she was there.

There are people who leave such a big place in your life that the empty space never really closes.

Lynn was one of those people in mine.

Happy birthday, my dear friend. I wish you were here. You have missed so much.

And we have missed so much of you.

--Laurie Jacobs



Farewell Jim Brennan



Celebrating the life of

JIM BRENNAN

Early the morning of July 3, 2026, Jim lost his 12-year battle with Parkinson complicated by Diabetes. He passed at home with the dogs and Jill.

Jim was as an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting, fishing, and spending time with his dogs.

Jim acquired Szabad Szaj CD, his first Vizsla in 1979 and Am Can Mex CH Jaybren's Sibhan UD TD SH. his first Irish Water Spaniel in 1983.

An AKC Breeder of Merit for Irish Water Spaniels and Vizslas, Jim spent the next 40 years competing in conformation, obedience, rally, agility and hunt tests with the dogs he produced. He piloted dogs to at least two UD titles, three All-Breed Best in Show rosettes, multiple Best in Specialty Show wins, group placements, several High in Trial awards, and multiple hunting titles in pointing dog, spaniel, and retriever hunt tests.

James F Brennan

July 22, 1940 to July 3, 2026



In memory of the loss of a founding member and great friend of the Irish Water Spaniel, IWSCOPS dedicates our shows to Mr. Jim Brennan

It is hard reflecting on the life of someone that you knew so well, and yet, never really knew. There always was a bit of uncertainty about what Jim was actually thinking. I asked him once about that. He said that he felt most people either did not really care about what you were about or they would not understand and so he kept most of his thoughts to himself. But if you paid attention, little pieces would come to light.

Boeing owned his brilliant brain during work hours. And the jobs he did over the years for them reflected that. But he also brought his passion for the dogs to Boeing and was instrumental in starting the Boeing Dog Training Club and classes. Lasting friendships developed over the years from that. Not for just Jim but for many of us in the dog world.

I first met Jim when he purchased his first IWS, Sibby. He wanted a hunting companion. As so often happens with people that come to this breed, he developed an interest in the versatility of the IWS. Sibby became a shining star in conformation and Jim's foundation bitch for a long running breeding program. As a team they conquered many venues and her titles were lengthy. Very lengthy. Yes, Jim had a competitive side!

Jim eventually found the Vizsla breed and, along with his wife Jill, had great success in that breed. But he stayed involved in the IWS until the end. He reached great recognition becoming president of the IWSCA and earning the vote of the club to become a distinguished Lifetime Member. He never missed a National until his health made it too difficult to go.

As a founding member of IWSCOPS, he supported the club in too many ways to even count. The club meant so much to him and he and Jill made that apparent when they chose to use the August Specialty to exchange their wedding vows.

They say that leaving this world in a better place than you found it is the ultimate judgement on your life. Jim certainly left the IWS community in the NW a better place. Rest in peace our friend.

By Colleen McDaniel



Rattail Reflections

Articles from the IWSCA Archives

"The Irish Water Spaniel"

by Louis Agassiz Fuentes and Others

The following description of the Irish Water Spaniel was originally published in 1919 by the National Geographic Society in "The Book of Dogs: An Intimate Study of Man's Best Friend." It was published at a time when the breed had fallen out of favor in both the show ring and in the field, and reveals a genuine understanding of the breed we know today. This profile of the IWS of more than a century ago is reproduced here from a typewritten letter that is part of the Irish Water Spaniel Club of America archives.

—Dan Sayers, IWSCA Historian

Identified more or less with the retrievers, because they perform similar duties, are the sporting spaniels, which, because they are divided into so many branches, constitute perhaps the largest dog family in the world.

The English "Kennel Club" recognizes Irish Water Spaniels, Water Spaniels other than Irish, Clumber Spaniels, Sussex Spaniels, Field Spaniels, English Springers, Welsh Springers, and Cocker Spaniels. They are all used to assist the gunner to find his game and to retrieve it after it is shot.

The Irish Water Spaniel is in a class by himself. You need to see him but once to remember him forever. It is said that he was the very last dog to be made, and that it was only by using the remnants of half a dozen other breeds that enough material was found with which to make him.

When he comes up to you for the first time, you'll probably laugh at him; but don't laugh too long; they'll be tears in your eyes if you do. For this quaint creature who looks as if he had borrowed from friends everything he has on, including his tail, has such an honest face, such a charming expression, and such a dignity of manner that he'll win your sympathy and your respect before the first smile of amusement has left your face. As a water dog, he is generally regarded as superior to any other member of his family, though most spaniels take kindly to the water.

Formerly quite a popularly known dog for sniping and ducking, the old Irish Water Spaniel seems to have been almost entirely abandoned, and few are now seen in this country. Perhaps the uses to which he was put are more satisfactorily met by the setters and retrievers, both of which are stronger and heavier and can equal him in work in the water.

The type of this breed should weigh about 50 pounds and be of a uniform liver color. The coat is quite long and tightly curled, but by no means woolly. It is long on the crown, but the face, front of the hind legs, and most of the tail should be clothed in short, soft, rather dull hair, giving the appearance of having been clipped.

It is very different in appearance from the land spaniel of the Cocker type, being in shape and size not greatly unlike the Poodle, but differing much from this breed in texture of coat and in the perfectly smooth face. In disposition, it is like both the Poodle and the spaniels generally—kind, affectionate, playful, and bright, but showing a strong tendency to be a little aloof with strangers. They also have a strong trend toward obesity in age, when they become heavy, untidy, and decrepit.



Regional Reports

Northeast Report

Elizabeth Theriault writes that “The summer certainly flew by! July and August had most weekends filled with various dog sports. Elton and Nash enjoyed dock diving, both celebrating new PBs with commemorative tokens given out by the facility. At the end of July, Elton completed his final leg towards his Rally Intermediate title. Earning class placements in all three of his qualifying legs. We started August off with attending conformation shows in Greenfield. Melody was WB both days and



Melody and Nash

Nash was WD/BOW both days as well. Couldn't be any prouder of the pups! “

Arrow earned his MACH agility title in September! We are very excited to have achieved this milestone. He also earned his NADD DJ dock diving title the same day.

And Ghillie also had a good late summer, earning her Junior Hunter title as well as her Premier Jumpers (PJD) agility title.



Arrow Dock Diving

Natalie Weissman writes that “Please find below photos of Ballyhoo's Valiant Knight Sir Joseph and Marley Creeks Precious Jenna Both dogs passed their Fetch Dog Novice Title August 23, 2026.”



Jeremy and Arrow

Emily Pikul writes that “BISS GchB. Epik's In Omnia Paratus CGC ATT TKN BCAT Enjoyed a wonderful sojourn to Canada in August. Bringing home a group 2 from Debra Davis of the USA and a Group 4 under Tomonoko Aizawa of Japan the two days she showed. She also won the Midwest supported entry in Waukesha, Wisconsin under Paula Nykiel. Her brother Beard, Epik's Semper Fortis, showed one day in Canada to garner winners dog best of

winners and best of opposite sex to finish with all majors.”

Hannah Loonsk writes in “Birdie and the boys were not just sitting Poole's Ide all summer. Quite frankly, they were accomplishing and conquering many goals!

National Specialty Winner, CH Poole's Ide Tequila Mockingbird (Birdie), became a champion and earned a group one for her first placement before becoming a multiple group winner. She is holding steady as #1 Irish Water Spaniel.



Kim and Ghillie





Joey Fetch August 2026

GCH Poole's Ide Smackwater Jack (Jack), picked up multiple group wins and placements culminating with a reserve best in show.

GCH Poole's Ide Eye of Agamotto RN (Motto), with his first time IWS owner-handler earned multiple group wins and placements, as well as a NOHS best in show.

GCH Poole's Riptide OHS RI DS CGC WC (Rip), was awarded multiple GCH Poole's Ide Dark Knight RN CGC TKN ATT WC WD (Oscar), with his first time IWS owner-handler, garnered multiple group placements while actively hunting between show days!

Finally, CH Poole's Ide Ragtime (Joplin), finished her championship in style by earning her fourth major win at the IWSCOPS Regional Specialty."

In just a couple of weeks we'll be at the Wine Country cluster, always a highlight of the fall! Hope to see you there!

Jeremy and Laurel



Jenna Fetch August 2026



Elton Rally Intermediate



Dana and Rip



Midwest Report

All of a sudden, it feels autumnal here; after an extreme summer overall, the crisp feel to the air is perfect. Upland bird hunting has begun here in the midwest; duck hunting is just around the corner. It was a pleasure to get together in Waukesha with the IWS group in July; Ruth has a nice write-up below with details. Both my dogs did their first dock diving and Fast CAT at the Cluster; had a ball.



Grouse (MACH2 Madcap The Earth Has Music For Those Who Listen MXC MJC MXP MJP2 MXF TQX T2B) earned her PACH at the Cambridge Kennel Club on 09/06/2026. I cannot thank Betty Wathne enough for choosing this opinionated, funny, smart girl for us. I hope everyone enjoys a glorious autumn with their brown curly pals.

Sarah Zumpf

Summer Splash Shows in Waukesha

By Ruth Bruskiewitz

"If you build it, they will come," and come they did to the Summer Splash Shows in Waukesha, Wisconsin on July 25 for an IWSCA supported entry. Organized by Sarah Zumpf, our Midwest Rep, an entry of 9 IWS, 7 of which were class dogs or bitches, gave the Midwest dogs their first chance at majors since the 2023 Minnesota National Specialty. Under judge Mrs. Paula Nykiel, Myna (Ch Epik's In Omnia Paratus CGC



TKN ATT BCAT), owned by Emily Pikul, was Best of Breed. Myna's litter sister Rorie (Ch Epik's the Last Straw RN CGC BCAT SIN), owned by Ann McNeill and Emily Pikul, was Select Bitch. Betty (Kendall's Anyone Can Whistle DS BCAT STR TKN), owned by Ruth Bruskiewitz and Carly Baltes, was Winners Bitch, Best of Winners and Owner Handler Best of Breed for her first points, a 5 point major! Josie (Marley Creek's So Many Things That I Wanna Say STR), owned by Tiffany and Terry Schuffert, was Reserve Winners Bitch and Best Bred By.

Cash (Muddy Waters Controlled Chaos O'Firecreek Farm), owned by Laurel Reeves and Diane Wacker, was Winners Dog and Opposite Sex. Also showing that day were Finley (Blackthorn Irishman's Daughter) owned by Jonathan Fisher and James Rubin, Fiadh (Muddy Waters Gaelic Girl) owned by Cheryl Friese, Fiain (Poole's Ide Up North AX AXJ XF) owned by Sarah and Bob Zumpf and Hannah Loonsk, and Bran (Evora's Brandy Pot Light BN RN SWE SCM DM FCAT CGC) owned by Lisa Schaitberger.



On Sunday, under Judge Mrs. Donna Ernst, Rorie was Best of Breed and Myna was Select Bitch. Cash was Winners Dog, Best of Winners, and Opposite Sex for the 5 point major, and Finley was Winners Bitch, also for the 5 point major! Bran was Reserve Winners Bitch.

The weekend also offered rally, obedience, dock diving and Fast CAT!

Sarah Zumpf's girls Grouse (MACH2 Madcap The Earth Has Music For Those Who Listen MXC MJC MXF T2B TQX MXP MJP2) and Fiain earned their DJ dock diving titles and Fast CAT qualifying runs toward their BCATs. Roux (Saracen Rockets Red Glare JHU STR), owned by Susan Sarracino and Bob Deihl earned her DN dock diving title and completed some Fast CAT fun runs. It was wonderful to see such a nice turnout of Irish Water Spaniels and their folk!



Fun in the Field and Fast CAT

By Susan Sarracino-Deihl

Bob and I have been busy this summer and early fall with the Irishers in the field and in Fast CAT.

On July 11 at the Cocker Spaniel Hunting Enthusiasts Spaniel Hunt Test Murphy passed the Junior test to finish his JHU. He is now CH Saracen Fireworks Over The Marsh JHU DCAT RATN RN DS CGC TKI FTI WD.

At the same tests on July 11 and 12, Doogan, Kirkmarsh Forester JHU DS WD, earned his first two passes in the Master tests. And 'baby' Roux, Saracen Rockets Red Glare JHU STR DN WD, earned her first two passes in the Senior tests.

Labor Day weekend started fall with a bang. Doogan earned his third Master pass at the Wisconsin English Springer Spaniel Association Hunt Test on September 5. Roux earned her third Senior pass at the WESSA spaniel hunt test on September 6.

The weekend before Labor Day we decided to have fun with three of our girls in Fast CAT. Roux, Bryna (Ch Saracen Hope for the Future) and Lily (Saracen Diamond Decoy SHUA DJ FTN WDX) ran Fast CAT at the Fond du Lac County KC and Greater Milwaukee Samoyed Fanciers Fast CAT Tests Aug 28 – 30. Roux and Bryna ran 6 courses, Lily ran 3 courses. Roux and Bryna each need one more run to finish their BCAT, while Lily needs 4.

We are looking forward to fall with cooler temperatures on the way!!



Mid-Atlantic Report

Fall is just around the corner in the Mid-Atlantic, and we're looking forward to cooler weather and a busy autumn with our Irish Water Spaniels!

In September, Ann and Brian McNeill and Tiffany Schuffert spent the day at the Pittsburgh Irish Festival, where our IWS crew enjoyed meeting festival goers and introducing plenty of people to the breed. As always, the dogs were wonderful ambassadors and attracted lots of attention—and Josie even found the perfect spot for a photo beside the Irish Water Spaniel sign!

Next up is the Butler Autumn Classic, September 19–20 at the Big Butler Fairgrounds in Prospect, Pennsylvania. Several of our Mid-Atlantic IWS friends will be there, and we're looking forward to a fun weekend of showing, visiting with friends, and cheering on our curly brown dogs.

Here's hoping everyone has a wonderful fall filled with cool weather, dog shows, training, long walks—and, naturally, plenty of opportunities for our Irish Water Spaniels to get wet!



Butler County Kennel Club Autumn Classic – IWS Results:

SATURDAY, 19 September, 2026

BOB - Myna
BOW/BOS - Arrow
SEL/OHBOB- Rorie
WB - Josie
RWB - Frankie

Sunday, September 20, 2026

BOB - Myna
BOW/BOS- Arrow
SEL/OHBOB/OHG3 - Rorie
WB - Gidget
RWB - Josie



Southwest Region Report

Ellen DeVrieze submitted article by Dr. Tim Fleming

The biggest news since Koffi and I moved to Colorado in the recent year is the significant amount of time we're spending in the mountains camping, hiking, and now hunting since the season has begun. We've added 3 new game birds to the list this year to hunt in addition to pheasants, ducks, and geese that we hunted in Pennsylvania: dusky (blue) grouse, sage grouse, and ptarmigan.

All 3 birds bring a whole new learning curve for each of us since they all live in very different environments. Sage grouse are hidden in the high mountain plains of sage



Koffi camping
Photo by Dr. Tim Fleming



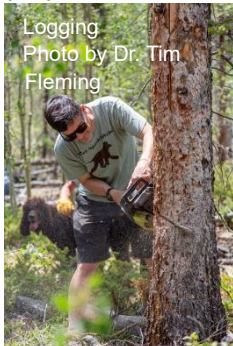
Sage Grouse Hunting
Photo by Dr. Tim Fleming

brush, and the season is especially short since there aren't many of these birds around. We didn't see any sage grouse this past weekend but came across maybe a dozen pronghorn, including a baby that Koffi found hiding in the sage and bolted away while the mother watched intently from a far off slope. Dusky grouse, or blue grouse as they've been called for years, I'm learning trees and grassy fields at 10,000 - 11,000 feet and so far are some of the most difficult birds to hunt since the terrain is punishing. It's punishing on me that is, since Koffi has no problem scaling these steep slopes, avoiding the cliffs, and jumping over or crawling under the fallen trees

I'm grunting and huffing through. Ptarmigan are a grouse-like bird that live above tree-line in the high alpine slopes of the mountains from 11,000 - 14,000 feet and blend in extremely well with the lichen-covered rocks. We didn't find any of these birds during a recent trip to scout for them, but we did come across an impressive bull moose that Koffi knew instinctively to keep his distance without any encouragement from me. I was amazed to see that the thin air at those elevations didn't really seem to phase him much at all. Me on the other hand, well... I was working hard to keep up with him as he trotted up the slopes. I also cracked the transmission case of my 2-wheel drive Chevy Cruz driving too far on one of the worst 4-wheel drive roads I've attempted during that trip. It ended up being better off to trade it in for a car with the 4-wheel drive and clearance to handle all I'm doing living here and I'll be well prepared when the snow starts to fall.



Kofi at Mountain Lake
Photo by Dr. Tim Fleming



Logging
Photo by Dr. Tim Fleming

We've certainly been enjoying ourselves in the Rockies and as I've watched Koffi quickly adjust to living in Colorado over these past months, with it's drier climate and rugged mountains, there's a word that was among the list of adjectives to describe an IWS I remember from the theme of one of the National Specialties (the Connecticut one I think) that really sticks in my mind: versatile. Over the 5 years I've had Koffi, no matter what I expose him to, from the show ring when he was younger and all the dog and people exposure he gets, to every kind of terrain and environment including oceans to mountain slopes over 12,000 feet and everything in between, it's plainly obvious to me how versatile this breed truly is.



Happy Fall to You All

I have been the Southwest representative for many years and an active member of our club for 14 years. I love this breed and the many friends and acquaintances that I have made along the way. While I have made the board aware that I am officially stepping down it would be nice to have a fresh set of eyes and ideas to fill my position. I will still be an active participant in promoting the Irish Water Spaniel and continue to pursue my love for creating art.

Thank you for the articles, photos and memories that you have shared.

Sincerely, Ellen DeVrieze



IWSCA Social Media



Irish Water Spaniel Club of America

Official Club Facebook Page - Official Club Announcements

<https://www.facebook.com/IWSCA/>

Irish Water Spaniel Photo Collection & Archive

A curated collection of the finest IWS photographs in the world

<https://www.facebook.com/IrishWaterSpanielPhotography/>

Irish Water Spaniel Conversations Facebook Group

Start a conversation about most anything IWS, brag or even vent.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/587531408082300/>



Irish Water Spaniel Instagram @IWSAmerica

<https://www.instagram.com/iwsamerica/>



Irish Water Spaniel Twitter @IWSAmerica <https://twitter.com/IWSAmerica>



Irish Water Spaniel Pinterest

A place for snapshots - send us your photos to be included

<https://www.pinterest.com/IrishWaterSpaniel/>



Irish Water Spaniel Club of America You Tube Channel

A place to view amazing videos of IWS around the world

Coming Summer 2023



Groups.IO

A Members Only e-mail group for club announcements and communications from the Board. If you are a member and not receiving e-mails please contact us.

Contact Laurie Jacobs for more information at
MysticCaribou@sbcglobal.net or on FB Messenger.

Corrections from July/August 2026 edition

1. The photos in the "Fun in the Field" and "5th Annual IWSCA Spaniel Hunt Test" articles were not by Susan Sarracino-Deihl. The field pictures were taken by professional photographer Mel Carranza. Permission was given by the photographer to post the photos in the newsletter.
2. In the article "It's A Wrap", Rebecca Tracy was incorrectly referred to as Rebecca Taylor
3. In the article "It's A Wrap", Dana Louttit also thanks Stacy Duncan and Michelle Cummings for their informative presentation on the breed standard.

Thank you for reading Rat Tails! If you have comments or corrections, please email me, Crystal Jordan, at jordanjj@att.net.

