



SUMMER 2025

Rat Tails

RAT TAILS OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE IRISH WATER SPANIEL CLUB OF AMERICA



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President's Message



What a wonderful 2025 National Specialty! Congratulations to all! See the article for the winners, but all the dogs and their owners were amazing! The setting was majestic and awe inspiring and for the most part the weather cooperated– always a plus! A huge **thank you** to the committee for making the week so enjoyable. Everything from the welcome buckets, the agility, rally, obedience, and scent work, to the suggested places to visit along with the “theme events” made being at 7,550 feet above sea level a real adventure! There are always so many moving parts to an undertaking like a national specialty, and the 2025 National Specialty Committee made it look easy!

Also, a huge thank you to the Regional Specialty committee for a fantastic event – you made it fun for all, and your trophies were amazing!

The committees put their heart and soul into these events, and it showed! We are so lucky that we have friends that go the extra mile for us, so when you see one of them – give them a huge hug, a big smile, and a “thanks a million;” they deserve it and I’m sure they’d love to hear it!

Have a happy, healthy and safe summer.

Pam



Officers, Committee Chairs, Regional Representatives

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

IWSCA Board of Directors

President
Pam Manus

1st Vice President
Timothy Gulley

2nd Vice President
Bethany Urban

Corresponding Secretary
Edith Blackwell

Recording Secretary
Tim Ufkes

Treasurer
Shona Ensign

Membership Director
Heidi Currier Ferris

IWSCA Committees

Rat Tails Newsletter Editor
Edith Blackwell
iwscarattailsnews@gmail.com

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

2026 National Specialty Committee
Dana Louttit
Hannah Loonsk

Puppy and Adult Dog Coordinator
Dana Louttit

Regional Representatives

Northeast
Laurel Baglia
Jeremy Kezer

Mid-Atlantic
Tiffany Schuffert

Southeast
Linda Deckard

Midwest
Sarah Zumpf

Southwest
Ellen DeVrieze

Northwest
Liz Liddle

International
Charlene Schermers



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



Club Objectives

The IWSCA is organized and operated exclusively for the charitable, humane treatment of animals, support of scientific study and research and educational purposes within the meanings of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

The specific objectives shall be:

1. To promote the public's knowledge and appreciation of dogs in general and Irish Water Spaniels in particular;
2. To produce, publish, and distribute to the general public educational materials about the proper care, treatment, breeding, health, development, and training of Irish Water Spaniels;
3. To support and promote study and research on the history, character, breeding, genetics, and particular health problems of the Irish Water Spaniel;
4. To establish a national database of resource materials about the Irish Water Spaniel;
5. To further understanding of the disease, defects, injuries, and other ailments that afflict dogs in general and Irish Water Spaniels in particular;
6. To acknowledge and advance the critical role of an AKC recognized Parent Club in providing education, health research, and support of rescue for the benefit of the general public, purebred dogs, and Irish Water Spaniels in particular;
7. To conduct activities, including sporting events, sanctioned matches, specialty shows, hunt and working certificate tests, obedience, agility and tracking trials, and other such activities and events as may be held under the rules of the American Kennel Club in furtherance of the above purposes;
8. To otherwise preserve and protect the Irish Water Spaniel and to do all things possible to bring its natural qualities to light, including promoting regional activities and the establishment of local clubs and/or interest/study groups;
9. To urge members and breeders to abide by the AKC's Code of Good Sportsmanship and accept the standard of the breed as approved by the American Kennel Club as the only standard of excellence by which the Irish Water Spaniels shall be judged.



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



Upcoming Events

September 26-27
Wine Country

Romulus, NY

October 1, 2025
Regional Specialty at Morris and
Essex Kennel Club Show

Colonial Park, NJ

October 25, 2025
Rat Tail Days,
Tuckertown Park Pavilion

South Kingstown, RI

January 10-11, 2026
Flushing Spaniel Supported
Entry

Knoxville, TN

May 12-16, 2026
2026 National Specialty at Seven
Springs Mountain Resort

Seven Springs, PA



Board Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2025

The following board members were present **Pam Manus, Dan Sayers, Melissa Gulley, Heidi Ferris, Edith Blackwell, Tim Gulley, Linda Deckard, and Bethan Urban.**

Welcome to the Board, new members **Shona Ensign and Tim Ufkes**

Invited guest: **Kim Kezer** joined the meeting to provide a status update for the Awards Committee.

Recording Secretary – Bethany Urban

- Next Board meetings will be on May 12, 2025, after our Annual General Meeting in Estes Park, Colorado and on June 17, 2025.
- March minutes were approved on May 1 2025.

Corresponding Secretary – Edith Blackwell

- No Report

Treasurer Report – Melissa Gulley

- See attached 1st Quarter Treasurer's Report

AKC Delegates Report – Dan Sayers

- See attached Delegates Report

Report of Committees

Specialties – Tim Gulley

- 2025 - Tim, everything is coming along, and last meeting will be in a couple of weeks.
- 2026 - Dana and Hannah, waiting for numbers from the hotel and the site and then they will present everything to the Board.
- 2027 - Gregory Siner, Stephanie O Reilly, and Bethan Urban have begun to look for locations for the 2027 National.

Newsletter – Edith Blackwell

- Next newsletter is scheduled to go out mid-July.

Membership – Heidi Ferris

- There is one new club member to approve. Adrienne Fowler, Indianapolis IN
Endorsed by Gregory Siner and Hannah Loonsk

Old Business

- Juniors Coordinator- Pam Manus
- Pam will reach out to Hannah Loonsk with suggestions from Board.
- AKC Semen Bank Initiative - Further discussion will be held at the July Board meeting.
- Morris & Essex - Edith will file paperwork with AKC. Shona Ensign will follow up before AKC deadline.
- Wine Country shows in September - need a decision and update from Laurel Baglia on what she wants to do, if anything, for Wine Country. Shona Ensign will follow up with Laurel.

New Business

- Motion made by Tim Gulley for a Supported Entry at the Del Valle Dog Club, Harvest Moon Classic shows to be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Ellen Devrieze will be the chairperson, and Tim Gully will support her. Second made by Melissa Gulley. Approved by all Board members.
- Vote for 2025 Sportsmanship Award. Motion made by Edith Blackwell to nominate Sarah Zumpf for the 2025 IWSCA Sportsmanship Award. Second made by Dan Sayers. Approved by all Board members.



Board Business Conducted after April 15, 2025, Board meeting

- On April 17, 2025, Jeremy Kezer requested approval to do two fundraising agility trials on Friday, June 27, 2025, to raise funds to be split equally between supporting agility at the 2025 National Specialty and to support the 2025 International Rat Tail Days event in October. The Agility Club of New Hampshire is running the trials on Saturday and Sunday. We will be splitting the judges' expenses and 3-day ring rental with the IWSCA paying 33% of the expenses. Motion made by Pam Manus to accept Jeremey's proposal. The second was made by Edith Blackwell.
- Approved by all Board members by an online vote on April 17, 2025.
- Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:30 pm by Linda Deckard. Second by Pam Manus



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



AKC Delegate's Report

January 14, 2025

Editor's Note: *This report was inadvertently left out of the last issue of Rat Tails.*

The quarterly AKC Delegate Meeting was held on Thursday, December 12, and Friday, December 13, 2024, at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

I attended meetings of the Parent Clubs Committee, Canine Health Committee, Legislative Caucus, General Caucus, and the Annual Meeting. A very brief summary is provided below:

- **Parent Clubs Committee** – AKC Canine College has developed a set of best practices for parent clubs to utilize for the development of a breed-specific online webinar which would include the following sections: Meet the Breed, Early History, Observe the Breed. Completed courses are utilized by judges, exhibitors, and groomers.
- **Canine Health Committee** – Parent Club Health Statements should be updated as needed to be consistent across the parent club website, AKC Marketplace, and all printed material sent by AKC to new puppy registrants. (CHIC requirements are not necessarily synonymous with the information on the statement.)
- **Legislative Caucus** – The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has indicated it will consider revisions to the requirements for the importation of dogs. A new advanced notice of “public rulemaking” is expected in the first half of 2025.
- **General Caucus** – “Torture Breeding” is the new weapon used by AR groups in the war on purebred dogs internationally. Ninety (90) breeds are threatened with participating in the 2026 World Dog Show in Austria. Parent Clubs will be the next target in the US. HSUS is rebranding itself as Humane World for Animals on Valentine’s Day.

At the **Delegate Meeting**, AKC Chairman Tom Davies provided a report that included:

- Entries at the 2024 AKC National Championship Presented by Royal Canin included more than 8,000 Conformation Entries and 1,200 Companion and Performance Entries.
- AKC Registrations are down notably since the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some breeders are reporting a decline in interest in their puppies and in future litters.
- Eight (8) million puppies need to be born annually in order to maintain the 90 million dogs that are estimated to be currently owned in the United States.
- Online Litter Registrations have been simplified and are fully integrated with the AKC Breeder Toolkit. Additional improvements are planned for 2025.

AKC CFO Ted Phillips delivered a report which included several key performance indicators:

- As of September 30, 2024: Revenue from Recording and Service Fees are up 5 percent from the same period in 2023; Revenue from Registration and Event Fees are down 10 percent; Dog and Litter Registrations are down 15 percent; Operating Expenses are up 2.7 percent; and Staff and Travel Costs are up 6.5 percent from the same period. Revenue from Advertisements, Sponsorships, and Royalties are comparable.

The Nominating Committee appointed by the AKC Board of Directors nominated the following four (4) Delegates for vacancies for the Class of 2029: Dr. Thomas M. Davies, Dr. Kenneth H. Levison, Sylvia A. Thomas, and Harvey M. Wooding. Additionally, five (5) Delegates were endorsed in writing



by the required number of candidates: Carl C. Ashby, III, Patricia M. Cruz, Eduardo T. Fugiwara, Lauri Maulucci, and Robin Stansell. All nine (9) candidates were given three minutes to present their qualifications to the Delegate Body, which will vote to fill the vacancies at the next quarterly meeting on March 11, 2025.

The Delegate Body voted on a proposed amendment to Chapter 16, Section 2, to allow a dog to earn championship points variously through Best in Show, Reserve Best in Show, and Group wins, or with Group Placements, inclusive of any points earned in Breed competition. There was a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the amendment was adopted.

Three (3) proposed amendments to the Rules Applying to Dog Shows will be voted on at the March 2025 AKC Delegate Meeting: (1) Chapter 11, Section 8-A would establish the administrative disqualification of a dog if on three occasions an Event Committee report determined the dog attacked a person or dog at an AKC event; (2) Chapter 11, Section 8 would allow dogs that have been neutered or spayed to compete in Brace or Teams at Independent Specialties or All-Breed Dog Shows that do not offer competition beyond Best of Breed; (3) Chapter 6, Section 2 would insert verbiage indicating that it must be stated in the premium list if neutered or spayed entrants are permitted to compete in the Brace and/or Team Classes. Information on each of the proposed amendments may be found on the Secretary's Page in the link below.

Details appear in the minutes from the Delegate Meeting, which have been published on the "Secretary's Pages" of the January 2025 edition of the *AKC Gazette*: [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn-origin-etr.akc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/13114538/AKC-Gazette-January-2025.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn-origin-etr.akc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/13114538/AKC-Gazette-January-2025.pdf).

Please send your comments to me directly at: Ninodanny@aol.com.

The next Delegate Meeting will be held at the Doubletree Newark Hotel in Newark, New Jersey, on Monday and Tuesday, March 10-11, 2025.

Yours respectfully,

Dan Sayers



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



April 15, 2025

The quarterly AKC Delegate Meeting was held on Monday, March 10, and Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at the Doubletree Newark Hotel in Newark, New Jersey.

I attended meetings of the Parent Clubs Committee, Canine Health Committee, Legislative Caucus, and the Annual Meeting. A very brief summary is provided below:

Parent Clubs Committee - A discussion focused on legislative efforts in the US and abroad to link breed type with animal cruelty. Brachycephaly is the obvious target, but so too is achondroplasia. The overarching concern is that this tactic will ultimately target all recognized purebreds, even those with pendulous ears and curly coats! Attempts to enact breed-specific “cruelty” legislation are directly linked to breeding restrictions, veterinary procedures, and even land use issues that would impact hunting, tracking, and other performance activities.

Canine Health Committee-The AKC Canine Health Foundation’s National Parent Club Canine Health Conference will take place August 7-9, 2025, in Durham, North Carolina. Attendance may be in-person or virtual. Two universities (University of Pennsylvania and Colorado State University) now have a Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation program. The bird flu (HSNI) was reviewed as it relates to feeding a raw diet and rising veterinary costs and recent office closures in over-served areas were also discussed.

Legislative Caucus- The Farm Bill (Healthy Dog Importation Act) remains stalled as of 2016. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is expected to come out with revisions (within the first six months of the year) to the requirements for the importation of dogs. Various proposed state-specific legislation was also reviewed, including a Florida bill that would assume any intact female over the age of six months is going to be bred (which would require a commercial license), and another bill in Illinois that would require genetic testing for “anything that may cause harm later in life.

At the Delegate Meeting, outgoing AKC President and CEO Dennis Sprung provided a report on his 45 years of service to the organization, highlighting many of the initiatives that were realized under his presidency. These innovations have included AKC Meet the Breeds, AKC Humane Fund, AKC Marketplace, and the Purebred Preservation Bank (PPB). The Delegates responded with a four-minute standing ovation.

AKC Chairman Dr. Thomas M. (Tom) Davies provided a report that included a heartfelt response to Mr. Sprung’s report and bestowed the outgoing President with the title of President Emeritus. His report included:

An announcement that Gina DiNardo has been appointed AKC’s new President and CEO, and Sheila Goffe was appointed AKC’s new Executive Secretary, effective April 01, 2025.

AKC CFO Ted Phillips provided a report which included several key 2024 performance indicators:

Total Operating Revenue was down 8.8% from 2023
Total Operating Expenses were up 1.5% from 2023
Registration Income was down 7.1% from 2023
Advertising Income was down 5% from 2023
Events Income was down less than 1% from 2023
Investment Income was up 35% from 2023



AKC Director of Education Ashley Jacot gave a presentation on AKC Canine College which included the following online programs:

- AKC Puppy Training Series
- AKC Puppy Preparation
- AKC Canine and Child Preparation Program
- AKC Canine College App
- AKC Pup Pals Program
- “Getting Started” Webinar Series

In six (6) rounds of ballots, the Delegate Body elected the following four (4) Delegates to the 2029 Class of the AKC Board of Directors:

- Eduardo T. Fugiwara (Two Cities Kennel Club)
- Sylvia A. Thomas (Kennel Club of Riverside)
- Robin Stansell (French Bulldog Club of America)
- Dr. Thomas M. Davies (Springfield Kennel Club, Inc.)

Additionally, following the conclusion of the AKC Delegate Meeting, Dr. Davies was re-elected as Chairman and Ors Michael Knight (Texas Kennel Club, Inc.) was elected Vice Chairman.

Three (3) proposed amendments to the Rules Applying to Dog Shows were voted on at the March 2025 AKC Delegate Meeting:

(1) Chapter 11, Section 8-A would establish the administrative disqualification of a dog if on three occasions an Event Committee report has determined the dog attacked a person or dog at an AKC event. A two-thirds vote in the affirmative was not achieved and the amendment was not adopted. The following two (2) amendments were voted on as a single amendment:

(2) Chapter 11, Section 8 would allow dogs that have been neutered or spayed to compete in Brace or Teams at Independent Specialties or All-Breed Dog Shows that do not offer competition beyond Best of Breed. A two-thirds vote in the affirmative was achieved and the amendment was adopted.

(3) Chapter 6, Section 2 would insert verbiage indicating that it must be stated in the premium list if neutered or spayed entrants are permitted to compete in the Brace and/or Team Classes. A two-thirds vote in the affirmative was achieved and the amendment was adopted.

One (1) proposed amendment to the Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club will be voted on at the June 2025 AKC Delegate Meeting: (1) Chapter 11, Section 9 would include verbiage to indicate the requirement of the President to obtain the advice and the consent of the Board of Directors prior to appointing an Executive Vice President, Vice President, or Assistant Vice President. This proposal will be published in two (2) issues of the AKC Gazette.

Details appear in the minutes from the Delegate Meeting, which have been published on the “Secretary’s Pages” of the April 2025 edition of the AKC Gazette: [chrome extension://efaidnbmnbbpajpcglclefindmkaj/https://images.akc.org/pdf/gazette/apri/-2025.pdf](https://images.akc.org/pdf/gazette/apri/-2025.pdf). Please send your comments to me directly at: Ninodanny@aol.com.

The next Delegate Meeting will be held at the Doubletree Newark Hotel in Newark, New Jersey, on Monday and Tuesday, June 9-10, 2025.

Yours respectfully,

Dan Sayers



2025 Q1 Treasurer's Report by Melissa Gulley

Wells Fargo Bank Account Balances as of March 31, 2025:

Main Acct #2296	\$109,300.47
2025 Specialty #2312	16,710.97
Membership #2379	2,837.36
PayPal Transfer #2338	1,945.00
Wine Country #2361 (no change)	1,771.63
Merchandise #2304 (no change)	5,809.20
Account #2320 (Min. Bal.)	550.00
Account #2353 (Min. Bal.)	550.00
Total Wells Fargo	\$139,474.63

PayPal Account Balances as if 4/15/2025:

IWSCA Treasurer Account	\$2,965.51
IWSCA Membership Account	\$1,982.42
IWSCA Merchandise Account	0.00
Total PayPal	\$4,947.93
Total Cash	\$144,422.56

Invesco Investment Account:

On January 1, 2025	\$46,266.21
On March 31, 2025	\$43,257.47
Increase in value:	40.00

This is the same note I wrote in October 2024: I would like to consolidate the Wine Country account with the Merchandise account. The Wine Country account has had very little activity in the past two years, and the Merchandise account has had no activity in the past two years. Because these accounts are practically inactive, Wells Fargo will send out a notification regarding their inactivity. At this time, we simply don't need eight bank accounts.

I would also like to close the IWSCA Merchandise PayPal account. No activity for a year, and it is not necessary to have three PayPal accounts. Too much work to keep track of, and too much bookkeeping with three accounts.

This is the last quarterly treasurer's report I will be submitting. Thank you to the IWSCA membership for your trust in me and allowing me to serve the last 7 years as a board member and treasurer. It has been my pleasure!



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



Reflections from Your Outgoing Treasurer

Melissa Gulley

I would like to say that it has been a pleasure being on the Board of the IWSCA! I have learned so much about the club, our breed, and our people! Thank you everyone for all your support over the last 9 years.

It was brought to my attention at the National in Estes Park, CA that there are some members who thought the IWSCA has too much money in our bank account and investment account. Their concern was because we are a Charitable Organization under the IRS Code 501(c) 3, we could not have “all this money” in our account, and we had to spend / donate more of our funds.

This is simply not true. As a Charitable Organization there isn't a limit (that I'm aware of) to the amount of funds we can hold. Think of the American Heart Association, The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. They must have millions in their name, and yes, they do spend millions on research and the needs in hundreds of communities. (There are other IRS codes for club designations that can have a tax consequence if their funds go over a specific amount annually, but we are not one of them.)

We are a very small organization, and we absolutely spend money in the areas of our constitution which are available to the public on our website. These are a few objectives that we use our funds for:

We promote the public's knowledge and appreciation of Irish Water Spaniels by representation at AKC Meet the Breeds by hosting our booth with knowledgeable IWS owners and breeders, as well as many of our dogs as we can get to attend. This includes information on how to care for an IWS, their character and health.

The IWSCA helps fund studies on canine health, as well as the health of our breed specifically. The club funded a cardiac clinic and paid an incentive to those who had an echocardiogram performed on their IWS. This was at the 2023 National in Minnesota. And in fact, we had one dog receive an echo who was NOT an IWS (no incentive was paid.) We have paid out over \$5,000 to date in cardiac echo incentives.

Another of our objectives is rescue. Some years we spend thousands of dollars on rescue, and some years we pay out only a few hundred dollars. We always send a donation to a humane society or veterinarian who has reached out to our rescue team about an IWS. Time and funds have been spent on veterinary care, training, and travel to rehome an IWS.

Another sentence I hear frequently, “We can afford it, we have all this money.” This is usually in relation to paying for a National/Regional Specialty or a supported entry. The answer is “not exactly.”

More than half of our funds in our bank accounts are “Designated Funds” including the following: Rescue, Health & Genetics and Breeders Education. ALL club money is available to be used for our charitable objectives. And as a 501 (C) 3 we have must be cognoscente of what we spend on events, awards, trophies, ribbons, prizes, etc.

Paying for a National Specialty

Those of you who have chaired or been on a committee for an IWSCA National Specialty, you all know how much time, work and money it takes. We all want the event to be nice and memorable, for all



good reasons. We all love to show off our dogs, whether it is in obedience/rally, scent work, field work, agility, or conformation. Irish Water Spaniels are wonderful dogs whether they are an AKC Champion, recognized in Field Work, or simply our companions.

These events cost a lot of money, and they are our biggest fundraising opportunities. Of course, rent for the venue is probably the highest cost, starting at around \$3,500 depending on the location. Believe it or not, hiring judges is also quite expensive, averaging around \$700 per judge. It can be quite difficult to find judges who live within easy driving distance from the event. This year we had five judges, several of whom needed to fly, rent a vehicle, and stay at a hotel. In many cases the entry fees for the event they are judging doesn't come close to covering the judges' expenses.

This is why it is so important to fundraise prior to the start of the National. Yes, we do make money on the silent and live auctions, but that won't pay for everything. Meals are always prepaid, and this is good. Although I acknowledge the food at our host hotel wasn't all that good! Hospitality also adds up – no one wants a dreary venue! When you pay to register, this small amount helps offset the cost of water, coffee, tea, etc. Please be sure to register even if you don't want to take home the welcome "bag".

This year's trophies and ribbons were spectacular! These are also costly. We owe a HUGE heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to Cat Shelby for donating all her time for the one-of-a-kind glass art trophies for the cowboy themed Regional Specialty! And a HUGE thank you to Stacy Duncan for her efforts in finding unique trophies and a ribbon maker who was able to make our ribbons so special! Congratulations to all who took home these special items.

One last note: I have heard the club is always asking for money. YES! That is correct. Without generous support from our dedicated club members and even those who aren't members, we would not be able to host beautiful national events to showcase our fabulous dogs. These events are a testament to the love and dedication of everyone involved, allowing us to learn from these wonderful animals and their devoted owners.



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



2025 Irish Water Spaniel National Specialty

By Dana Louttit

The Irish Water Spaniel Club of America took the show on the road for our National Specialty this year. The venue was stunning Estes Park, Colorado, famous for its surrounding snow-capped mountain peaks and herds of elk claiming the streets and yards as their territory. It was a toss-up whether the out-of-state members who travelled the shortest distance came from Arkansas or Oklahoma, but we still had a lovely entry, robust attendance, and lots of activities to enjoy.

The “big” winners were: GCHB CH Poole’s Ide By Design, owned by Greg Siner and Stephanie O’Reilly, and bred by Greg Siner, Hannah Loonsk, and Bethany Urban (National Specialty, Judge Paula Nykiel); and GCHB CH Flintcrest Five Star General CGC TKN, owned by Stacy Duncan and Cat Shelby, and bred by Colleen McDaniel and Stacy Duncan (Regional Specialty, Judge Tara Darling-Lyon). Congratulations to Skeeter and Grant and their teams, and to Greg Siner on his 19th Irish Water Spaniel National Specialty win!

The many talents of the breed were showcased throughout the week in agility, scent work, obedience, rally, conformation and field events. Many IWS were entered in multiple venues; just a few of many examples of IWS versatility and durability were three veterans: the conformation Gun Bitch who took the Agility High in Trial award and ran the WCX field test; the IWS dog with the most Best in Shows in history who took Agility High in Trial Preferred, and the Select Bitch who ran in the WC and WCX tests and served as bye and pick up dog for everyone else.

Of course it was not just the dogs who had fun. The hard-working and imaginative Specialty Committee put on a smooth, four-day party. The highlight was a Cowboy-themed Regional Specialty, with handlers who dressed the part, Western-motif ribbons, spectacular glass trophies by Cat Shelby, and a delicious ringside BBQ dinner. And there was still time for side trips into nearby Rocky Mountain National Park, and s’mores at the hotel fire pits at night. Too soon, it was time to pack up and head home, inspired to see what else we can do with our dogs while we count the days until the next IWSCA National Specialty in Champion, Pennsylvania, May 12-16, 2026.

(Originally Submitted to the AKC Gazette as “Rocky Mountain High”)



2025 Irish Water Spaniel National Specialty Results

Best of Breed:

GCH CH Poole's Ide by Design "Skeeter"
Breeder: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/
Bethany Urban. Owner: Gregory Siner/
Stephanie O'Reilly.

Best of Winners:

Poole's Ide Dark Knight "Batman" Breeder:
Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany
Urban. Owner: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah
Loonsk

Best of Opposite Sex:

CH Realta & Sycomore O'Boy "Boy" Breeder:
Mark and Sondra Barker/Rosemary Sexton.
Owner Mark and Sondra Barker

Select Dog:

GCHB CH Flintcrest Five Star General RN
FDC DJ CGC TKN "Grant" Breeder: Colleen
McDaniel/Stacy Duncan. Owner Stacy
Duncan/Cat Shelby.

Select Bitch:

GCHS Poole's Ide Say No More CD RA JH
DS CGC TKI "Simone" Breeder: Gregory M.
Siner/Bethany Urban/Toni Owens. Owner:
Hannah Loonsk/Gregory Siner/Bethany Urban

NOHS:

GCHS Poole's Ide Say No More CD RA JH
DS CGC TKI "Simone" Breeder: Gregory M.
Siner/Bethany Urban/Toni Owens. Owner:
Hannah Loonsk/Gregory Siner/Bethany Urban

Award of Merit:

Poole's Ide Return to Mallyree "Isla" Breeder:
Gregory Siner/Hannah Loonsk. By: GCHS
Mallyree Owner: Gregory Siner/Hannah
Loonsk.

CH Brekkon's Brown Eyed Girl at Flintcrest
DJ CGC TKN FTI "Skye" Breeder: Rebecca
Brooks/Maribeth Bryant. Owner: Erin Fogg/
Michell, Evans.

Best Puppy:

Poole's Ide Dark Knight "Batman" Breeder:
Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany
Urban. Owner: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah
Loonsk

Best Bred By:

Poole's Ide Dark Knight "Batman" Breeder:
Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany
Urban. Owner: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah
Loonsk

Best Veteran Dog:

Ballyhoo's V Finnegan McNeill BN FDC CA
BCAT DS DJ CGCA TKN VHMA JH JHU WD
"Finn" Breeder: Dede Selph Owner: Ann
McNeill

Best Veteran Bitch:

GCHS CH Poole's Ide Say No More CD RN JH
CGC TKI "Simone" Breeder: Greg Siner/Toni
M Owens/Bethany Urban. Owner: Hannah
Loonsk & Gregory M Siner & Bethany Urban

Winners Dog:

Poole's Ide Dark Knight "Batman" Breeder:
Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany
Urban. Owner: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah
Loonsk

Reserve Winners Dog:

Castlehill's P.S. Abhainn Mhor of Dalbrian
Breeder: Susan Tapp/Brenda Bauerlein/
Melissa McMunn Owner: Dallas Haley

Winners Bitch:

Poole's Ide Return to Mallyree "Isla" Breeder:
Gregory Siner/Hannah Loonsk. By: GCHS
Mallyree Owner: Gregory Siner/Hannah
Loonsk.

Reserve Winers Bitch:

Poole's Ide New Horizon at Cuardach "Dawn"
Breeder: Gregory M Siner/Stephanie O'Reilly.
Owner: Stephanie O'Reilly/Gregory M Siner



Brood Bitch:

GCHS Poole's Ide Say No More CD RA JH DS CGC TKI "Simone" Breeder: Gregory M. Siner/Bethany Urban/Toni Owens. Owner: Hannah Loonsk/Gregory Siner/Bethany Urban

Sweepstakes Best Puppy:

Poole's Ide Dark Knight "Batman" Breeder: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany Urban Owner: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk

Sweepstakes Best of Opposite Puppy:

Poole's Ide New Horizon at Cuardach "Dawn" Breeder: Gregory M Siner/Stephanie O'Reilly. Owner: Stephanie O'Reilly/Gregory M Siner

Sweepstakes Best Veteran:

Flintcrest Going All In @ Whistlestop BN RA DSA CGC TKN ATT FTI "Wager" Breeder: Colleen McDaniel/Stacy Duncan Owner: Erin Fogg/Michell Evans.

Sweepstakes Best of Opposite Veteran:

Muddy Waters Controlled Chaos O'Firecreek Farm "Cash" Breeder: Diane Wacker/Laurel Reeves Owner: Laurel Reeves/Diane Wacker

High in Trial Obedience

Poole's Ide Finally at Keely "Finally" Breeder: Dede Selph/Gregory M Siner/Bethany Urban Owner: Lorna Pumphrey.

High Combined Rally:

CH Wicklow N' Blackthorn's I Don't Look for Trouble CD RM CGC "Jynx" Breeder: Melissa Gulley/Timothy Gulley/R James Rubin Owner: Melissa Gulley/Timothy Gulley/R James Rubin

High Triple Combined Rally:

GCH Blackthorn's Lass That Loves A Sailor in Wicklow CD RM CGC "Calypso" Breeder: Timothy Gulley/Melissa Gulley/R James Rubin Owner: Timothy Gulley/Melissa Gulley/R James Rubin

Agility Results:**High in Trial**

"Ghillie" CH MACH Chantico's Super G O' Muddy Waters CD RN MXS MJS MXF 12B2. Owned by Jeremy Kezer, Kim Kezer, Mindy Garbarino

High in Trial ~ Preferred

"Sloane" GCHG CH MACH2 Poole's Ide Sargeant Sloane CD RE MXG MJG MXP MJP MFB T2B2. Owned by Stephanie O'Reilly, Gregory Siner, Bethany Urban

Classes**T2B 20"**

#1 "Erin" Poole's Ide Erin Go Bragh BN RI OA NAJ BCAT SWE SCM SIM SEM. Owned by: Terry Kast

#2 "Clara" Flintcrest Step Right Up OA OAJ XF FTI. Owned by: Sally Lewis & Lois MacDonald

Master JWW 20"

#1 "Ghillie" CH MACH Chantico's Super G O' Muddy Waters CD RN MXS MJS MXF 12B2. Owned by Jeremy Kezer, Kim Kezer, Mindy Garbarino

#2 "Arrow" Chantico's A Slice And A Pint JH MX AXJ NF. Owned by: Kim Kezer, Jeremy Kezer & Mindy Garbarino

Master JWW 20" Preferred

#1 "Sloane" GCHG CH MACH2 Poole's Ide Sargeant Sloane CD RE MXG MJG MXP MJP MFB T2B2. Owned by Stephanie O'Reilly, Gregory Siner, Bethany Urban

Master Standard Preferred

#1 "Sloane" GCHG CH MACH2 Poole's Ide Sargeant Sloane CD RE MXG MJG MXP MJP MFB T2B2. Owned by Stephanie O'Reilly, Gregory Siner, Bethany Urban.



Scent Work Results

Novice "A" Container:

1 "Sparky" Saracen's Light My Fire Owned by: Dr. Christine Robertson

Container Advanced:

1 "Raine" Cat's Over The Rainbow CD BN RE MXP MJP NFP BCAT SWN SBE SIA RATCHX10 CZ8P3 CGC TKI. Owned by: Sheryl Krohne

2 "Darcy" CH Arroyo Rose By Any Other Name NA NAJ NF SWN SIA SEA CGC. Owned by: Sally Lewis & Lois Macdonald

Container Master:

#1 "Paddy" CH Ballyhoo's Who's Your Paddy CD RA NA BCAT SWM SIME SEME RATO. Owned by Terry Kast.

Exterior Novice

1 "Clara" Flintcrest Step Right Up OA OAJ XF FTI. Owned by: Sally Lewis & Lois MacDonald

Exterior Advanced

1 "Darcy" CH Arroyo Rose By Any Other Name NA NAJ NF SWN SIA SEA CGC. Owned by: Sally Lewis & Lois Macdonald

Exterior Excellent

1 "Erin" Poole's Ide Erin Go Bragh BN RI OA NAJ BCAT SWE SCM SIM SEM. Owned by: Terry Kast

2 "Darcy" CH Arroyo Rose By Any Other Name NA NAJ NF SWN SIA SEA CGC. Owned by: Sally Lewis & Lois Macdonald

Exterior Master

#1 "Paddy" CH Ballyhoo's Who's Your Paddy CD RA NA BCAT SWM SIME SEME RATO. Owned by Terry Kast.

WC Qualifier:

CH Poole's Ide Riptide RN CGC "Rip"
Breeder: Gregory M. Siner/Hannah Loonsk/Bethany Urban Owner: Dana Louttit/Hannah Loonsk/Gregory Siner/Bethany Urban

Annual Awards at 2025 Specialty



Photo by Jeremy Kezer



Partnering with AI: How ChatGPT Helped Me Raise a Litter

By Tiffany Schuffert, Marley Creek Irish Water Spaniels

When I decided to breed my most recent litter of Irish Water Spaniels, I never expected one of my most helpful assistants would be... AI. But that's exactly what happened. Throughout the chaos of whelping and raising a litter—vet appointments, poop management, feeding schedules, evaluations, and puppy placement—ChatGPT (a conversational artificial intelligence (AI) developed by OpenAI) was an incredibly helpful tool. This wasn't my first litter, but I also don't have decades of experience like others do, so additional support was welcomed.

A Digital Breeding Assistant

I started using ChatGPT early on to plan my breeding calendar and checklist. I could ask it anything—what I would need for whelping or how much weight puppies should be gaining. It gave me quick answers grounded in veterinary and breeder best practices. It even helped me build an Excel spreadsheet to track weights and milestones—and reminded me to update it!

As we got closer to whelping, I used ChatGPT to log and analyze Patsy's daily temperatures, helping me recognize when we were within 24 hours of delivery. When I described her behavior—panting, nesting, restlessness—it helped me identify which stage of labor she was in so I could be prepared without jumping the gun. Having that kind of support in the moment gave me peace of mind and let me focus on what mattered most: safely delivering healthy puppies.

Round-the-Clock Advice

One of the most useful parts of using ChatGPT was being able to get answers, even at 3 a.m., when I was worried about diarrhea or wondering if I should adjust their meals. It walked me through dietary troubleshooting, helped me calculate feeding ratios when I was combining kibble with raw, and even suggested ways to shift the puppies' feeding arrangements based on weight gains to ensure everyone was getting the right amount. It helped me identify what might be causing issues and when to call the vet.

Marketing & Communication Help

When it came time to market litter and communicate with prospective buyers, ChatGPT was a huge help. It assisted with writing puppy bios, polishing email responses, and generating ideas for social media posts and announcements. It even helped me brainstorm creative AKC registered names and reviewed my puppy contract for clarity and professionalism. Whether I needed to respond to a first-time puppy buyer or craft a polite message to someone not quite the right fit, I had a second set of eyes (or circuits) to support me.

Support with Puppy Packets & Go-Home Materials

I used ChatGPT to help revise and clean up the four-page go-home document I give to new owners. It helped me make sure my language was clear, professional, and easy to understand—without losing that personal touch. I also asked for suggestions on what else to include in my puppy packet, like feeding schedules, training tips, vaccine reminders, and enrichment ideas for the first few weeks. It even helped format documents and generate printable PDFs.



Training & Socialization Support

As I began early socialization and training, ChatGPT helped me design ENS sessions and, as they grew, short training sessions to address individual quirks based on widely recognized puppy-raising methods like Puppy Culture and Avidog. Whether I needed ideas for name recognition games, a refresher on early free-stack training, or thoughts on how to tire out busy puppies without overstimulating them, it was like having a dog-savvy friend always on hand.

Puppy Evaluation Support

As the puppies grew, I uploaded stacked photos and wrote up personality descriptions for each of them. ChatGPT helped me compare those photos to the breed standard and pointed out strengths and areas for improvement in structure and balance. When I factored in temperament and drive, it even helped me think through which puppy might be the best fit for my goals. While the final decision was mine, it felt like having a second opinion that was thoughtful, unbiased, and well-informed—something every breeder can appreciate during evaluation week. This part of AI is not without its weaknesses and is not a substitute for you knowing your standard, but it was interesting to get the AI perspective. With the way AI works, the more we do this as breeders, the smarter AI will get in distinguishing preferred characteristics and comparing photos to the standard.

How Breeders Can Get Started with ChatGPT

Getting started is easy—just go to chat.openai.com, create an account, and start typing. You can use it from your phone, tablet, or computer. There's a free version, but I personally use the paid version (ChatGPT Plus) for the most up-to-date features and better responses.

Here are a few prompt ideas to try:

- “Give me a whelping supply checklist for a medium-sized dog breed.”
- “What’s a safe weight gain range for puppies in the first two weeks?”
- “Help me write a go-home document for puppy buyers.”
- “My 7-week-old puppies have soft poop—what could be the cause?”
- “Draft a polite response to a buyer asking to delay pickup by a week.”
- “What’s a good social media caption to introduce a puppy available for placement?”
- “Suggest fun enrichment ideas for a litter of 6-week-old puppies.”
- “Write bios for 8 Irish Water Spaniel puppies based on their personalities.”
- “Help me draft a socialization checklist for 8-week-old puppies.”

You can be casual, detailed, or even vague—ChatGPT will ask follow-ups if it needs more info. It's not a substitute for a vet, mentor, or your own instincts, but it can absolutely make the day-to-day details easier to manage.

Why I'd Recommend It to Other Breeders

As breeders, we juggle a lot—and while AI can't scrub the puppy pen (yet!), it can help reduce the mental load. Having ChatGPT available meant I didn't have to scroll through Facebook groups, search ten websites for answers, or wake up my friends in the middle of the night. I could ask a question and get tailored advice instantly—whether it was for feeding, health, enrichment, or finding the right home for each pup.

It's not a replacement for experience, mentorship, or a good vet—but it is a game changer for managing time and stress. I plan to keep using it for future litters, and I'd encourage other breeders to give it a try.



Regional Reports

Northeast Report



Dinah retrieving

From Jenny Wadhwa:

Hello from sunny Maine! Our lovely Dinah Lou (Hooligan N' Epik's Absurd Little Bird TKN CGCA SCN WD) has exceeded our expectations and passed three legs of her JHU with high marks. Considering she was shot over for the first time in mid-April, we are thrilled with her performance! She will finish up her title and start testing in senior in early August before hunting duck and woodcock this fall.



Dinah and Oscar swimming

In other news, Dinah also got a new baby brother, Oscar (Poole's Ide Dark Night)! After proving himself at the national Oscar / Batman made his way to Maine where he has been chasing chukar and splashing in every body of water he can find. Angus and I are excited to continue his momentum in the show ring and the field.”





Justine with Judge Linda

From Natalie Weissman:

Rach 2 Ballyhoo's True Blue Justine CDX BN GN RM 5 RAE 6 CAX DN ATT TKN BCAT picked up Triple Q legs 17 and 18 towards her RACH 3 and picked up the Triple Q Ribbon and High in Combined Ribbons at the K - 9 Trial Saturday in a double AKC Rally Trial Natalie and Justine”

Alice Getchell tells us “Midge received her Rally novice title last month....Almost a year to the day that Hadley won her Rally title at the IWSC national with a 1st place finish. We’re sad that Hadley isn’t here with us this year to celebrate it.”

And from our corner of the world - we made the long drive to Colorado for the specialty. All the dogs participated with Ghillie (MACH CH Chantico’s Super G O’ Muddy Waters CD RN MXS MJS MXF T2B2 WC)

in Agility, Rally, Obedience, conformation and the WCX, Arrow (Chantico’s A Slice And A Pint JH MX MXJ OF WC) in agility and the WCX, and Ishka (Poole’s Ide Making A Splash With Chantico) in conformation. Ghillie won the High In Trial award in agility and picked up a Rally Advanced leg and showed beautifully in the Gun Bitch and Veteran Bitch classes. Ishka was in the show ring for the first time, and while she was pretty good when she was the only dog in her 6-9 mo class, she had a hard time not wanting to chase and play with the other dogs when she was in the Winner’s bitch class.

Both Arrow and Ghillie competed in the WCX. It was the first time they competed at that level and both did really well. Unfortunately both broke on the honor. But we came away pleased with how our training is going and are looking forward to further field events.

We hope you can join us for the Wine Country cluster in upstate New York, September 25-28th. It’s always a good gathering of IWS folks!

Thanks, Jeremy and Laurel



Arrow (left) and Myna (right)



Mid-Atlantic Report

Greetings from the Mid-Atlantic! It's been a busy and exciting spring for our Irish Water Spaniel community. From the whelping box to the show ring and a few other places, our members have had their hands full—and their hearts fuller.

Puppy News

This spring brought multiple litters to the Mid-Atlantic.

On April 8th, Marley Creek's Walkin' After Midnight (Patsy) and Flintcrest Five Star General (Grant) welcomed 8 nuggets into the IWS world.

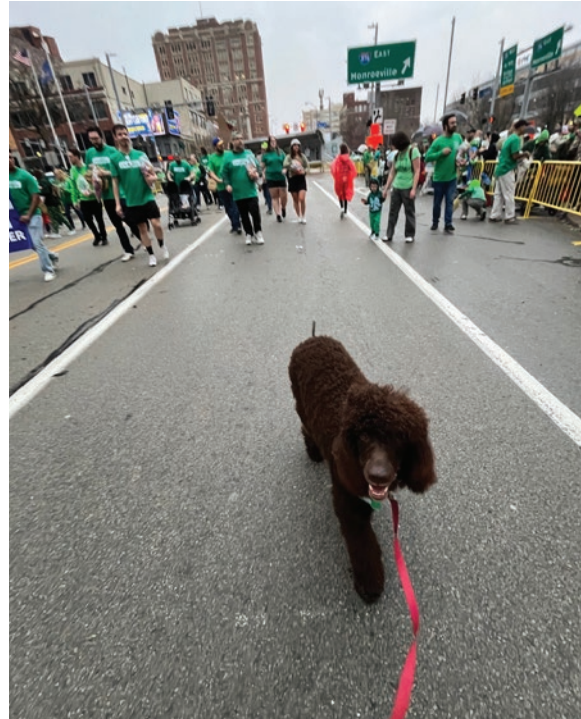
And on May 19th, Waterford's Jumpin Jive Jackpot (Bingo) and Landacre's Nordic Sailor (Skiff) welcomed 5 pups into the IWS world.

Congratulations to all the new puppy owners—we look forward to seeing these youngsters in the ring and field soon!

Spring Highlights

Many of our folks have been out and about with their dogs in multiple AKC sports and out in the Community!

- Sport (Owned by Missy McMunn) earned his SCA, SIA and SEA in May.
- Tim Fleming and Koffi marched in the Pittsburgh St. Patrick's Day Parade!



Koffi in the Pittsburgh St. Patrick's Day Parade



Missy with Sport

And, in the show ring, here are a few highlights from the IWSCA Supported Entry at the MD Sporting Dog Show in March 2025:

Friday:

- BOB: Poole's Ide By Design (Skeeter) owned by Greg Siner and Stephanie O'Reilly
- BOS/BOBOH: Bunyarra It's Cole's Law at Epik (Carrot) owned by Emily Pikul, Devina Christopher, and Florence Blecher
- BOW/WD: Epik's Seper Fortis (Beard) owned by Emily Pikul and Helen & Alon Jaffe
- WB: Epik's The Last Straw (Rorie) owned by Ann McNeill and Emily Pikul
- Sel: Epik's In Ominia Paratus (Myna) owned by Emily Pikul





Devina with Carrot

Saturday:

- **BOB:** Epik's In Ominia Paratus (Myna) owned by Emily Pikul
- **BOS/BOBOH:** Bunyarra It's Cole's Law at Epik (Carrot) owned by Emily Pikul, Devina Christopher, and Florence Blecher
- **BOW/WD/Best Bred By/Best Bred By in Show:** Epik's Seper Fortis (Beard) owned by Emily Pikul and Helen & Alon Jaffe
- **WB:** **Poole's Ide New Horizon at Cuardach (Dawn) owned by Stephanie O'Reilly and Greg Siner**
- **Sel:** Poole's Ide By Design (Skeeter) owned by Greg Siner and Stephanie O'Reilly
- **Sel:** Landacre's Nordic Sailor (Skiff) owned by Missy McMunn
- **Best Gun Dog:** Poole's Ide On My Mind (Georgia) owned by Greg Siner, Hannah Loonsk, and Bethany Urban



Emily with Beard (l) and Rorie (r)



Hannah with Georgia (l) Skeeter (middle) and Emily with Myna (r)

Saturday Sweeps:

- **Puppy:** Crispin's Don't Go Breaking My Heart (Elton) owned by Elizabeth Theriault
- **Veteran:** Landacre Nordic Sailor (Skiff) owned by Missy McMunn



Sunday:

- BOB: Epik's In Ominia Paratus (Myna) owned by Emily Pikul
- BOS: Bunyarra It's Cole's Law at Epik (Carrot) owned by Emily Pikul, Devina Christopher, and Florence Blecher
- BOW/WD/BOBOH: Crispin's Don't Go Breaking My Heart (Elton) owned by Elizabeth Theriault
- WB (and new Champion): Epik's The Last Straw (Rorie) owned by Ann McNeill and Emily Pikul
- Sel: Poole's Ide By Design (Skeeter) owned by Greg Siner and Stephanie O'Reilly



Skiff (l) and Stephanie with Dawn (r)



Sunday Sweeps:

- Puppy: Crispin's Don't Go Breaking My Heart (Elton) owned by Elizabeth Theriault
- Veteran and Best Veteran in Show: Poole's Ide That Touch of Mink (Darla) owned by Emily Pikul and Florence Blecher

Whew! That's a lot! I can't wait to see what summer has in store!

Submitted by Tiffany Schuffer



Elton with Elizabeth



Emily with Darla



Southwest Report

How I Spent My Spring; and Why You Should Attend a National Specialty

by Lois MacDonald

Hi everyone from East to West and North to South; from across the street to around the world. It's Lois from sunny and sweltering SoCal (ifornia). I'm here to share stories of this year's IWSCA National Specialty in beautiful Estes Park, CO and explain why YOU should be good to yourself by attending next year's Specialty in just as beautiful Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion, PA.

As most of you know, Sally, our 3 IWS and I were evacuated for almost a month due to the damage and destruction of the LA fires. A huge thank you to Florence Blecher for immediately reaching out and opening her home to us for as long as we needed.

Our city is decimated. Like Paradise and Lahaina, Altadena will never be the community it once was. Many dear friends and neighbors lost everything.

After being allowed to return, we faced weeks without power and water and months of toxic cleanup. We were exhausted and stressed. The poor pups couldn't run around in their own yard or go on walks in their neighborhood because of the toxic fallout.

On to happiness and joy...

The IWSCA National Specialty in Estes Park came at the most perfect time for us. Co-Chairs Tim Gully and Michelle Cummings, thank you for choosing such a glorious, inviting and well-appointed location. The weather was amazing, exciting and well-timed. We had warm, sunny days for all of the outdoor events; snow, sleet, hail and rain during some of the indoor events and evenings. There were fabulous grounds for Agility, Scent Work and Field (WC/WCX), a large interior exhibition space with mat floors for the rings, and an adjacent bathing area with WARM water.

This was a chance to for us to let go of the stress, breathe clean air and let the girls run around



without worry of heavy metal exposure. You could feel and see the changes in the dogs. Baby Joplin was back to her sweet funny naughty self. She stood like a big girl for the Judges. Clara got Qs in Rally and Scent Work and one of her 1st Qs in Agility since her TPLO surgery. But it was our 9 ½ year-old Darcy who sparkled. She titled in Rally and Scent Work and got HOT in Scent Work Advance. But the absolute biggest surprise and delight was what happened after the Field events.

The lovely and always thoughtful Heidi Ferris created a sign-up for anyone and their dog to receive exposure and actual duck retrieving with expert coaching.

It took less than 5 minutes of showing, playing a tossing a duck for my “mature” suburban raised companion to realize that this was what she was always meant to do. She waited by my side until I released her to “fetch it up” and instinctively brought it back to hand. She would still be in that field if she had her way.

When we had to call it quits and I finished loading up the other girls, Darcy was just trotting back from the duck bag with a new duck. “Can I keep it, please mom?!” I’m sorry girl, it needs to stay with the other ducks. We gotta go home.



In Conclusion: Why you should attend a National Specialty

- You should attend a National Specialty to see parts of the USA you haven’t visited before
- to change your internal dialog
- to leave the everyday stresses at home
- to be with friends old and new
- to be with your dog(s) without distractions
- for you and your dog(s) to be with other IWS and their people
- to support this unique, special and rare old breed
- to support this breed club whose mission is to protect and preserve this special breed
- to hopefully see yourself as your dog(s) see you
- to let your dog(s) remind you of everything that makes them special
- **AND to remind your dog(s) how special they are to you!**



Midwest Report

It is summer in the Midwest at last! The snow & ice are gone; greens & blues electrifying and the transition seems to happen almost overnight (not really).

I was able to attend the National in Estes Park; it was fabulous (connecting with people from all over and their dogs is the best).

There are new puppies, new titles, new memories and competitions every weekend in multiple venues (& sports). It is easy, in June, to believe in 'Endless Summer'. Enjoy, everyone!

Sarah Zumpf



Elan, Sarah, and the puppies

From Rosemary Sexton:

On 05/15/2025 Realta welcomed 2 healthy puppies from Élan (Realta's Élan! CD RN MH OA OAJ) & Blue (GCHB CH Sycamore Ballad of Blue CGC) bred by myself, Mark & Sondra Barker. Raising these 2 beautiful pups has been an absolute delight.

Élan has been a wonderful mother, and at 8+ weeks, He & She are smart, active and investigating their world; enjoying adventures and meeting new people on an almost daily basis.



Elan with her puppies



CH Reálta & Sycomore The Fifth Element Leeloo NAP earned her JH in 4/4 attempts. She apparently made a good impression garnering much attention on the way. Special thanks to Tim & Lauren Springer and the Dynamic Retrievers team. "That was the hardest Junior I have ever ran!!!" Per Lauren

Breeder's Brag!!! I'm thrilled for Ruth Crocker and Driver who recently completed his Junior Hunter title. With this accomplishment, Marvel's second litter, sired by Bayes, and soon to be six years old, boasts a MBIS NBISS MBISS MRBIS GCHS (Spry), a GCH with a JH (Driver), an almost GCH with an SH (Karma) and the youngest ever MH in the breed who also qualified to run in the master national... as well as having numerous other titles (Élan).

Marvel's first litter, sired by Linus, produced a field titled Am GCH Can GCHEX (BIS) (Layla) and a National specialty WD.



Leeloo

Her third litter, sired by Blue (and soon to be three years old), can boast three US champions and one Canadian champion. Boy is BISS CH and is a multiple group placer, Pru is 3 points from her GCH, Leeloo has her CH as well as an agility title and her JH!!! These three also received recognition at National specialties and regional specialties as WD/BOW and RWD and RWBs. Colette is our Canadian CH and is a Group placer as well as a performance title holder.

With the accomplishments of her last litter, and her own performance success, I am honored that Marvel was posthumously awarded the 2024 Brood Bitch title. I'm sure she would be as proud of her get as I am of her. She was a special dog who could not have been loved more. GCH Reálta's Modern Marvel CDX RA SH DJ CGC, a true "Quintessential All Rounder."



Marvel (I)





Lily

The 4th Annual IWSCA Sponsored Spaniel Hunt Test

The weekend of May 31st – June 1st the IWSCA and the FSSA ran their 4th Spaniel hunt tests. IWSCA and FSSA members helped one another since numbers are low for both clubs. The weekend was beautiful with perfect weather; temperatures started in the high 40's in the morning when the dogs were running the upland portion and temperatures were in the mid 60's by the time the dogs were doing the water blind and water retrieves. The IWSCA test had 50 entries, the FSSA entries had 41 entries.

Many thanks to Chuck Pederson, IWSCA Event Chairman and Renee Pederson, Event Secretary. They did Yeomans' jobs in running both tests! With Lisa Winters, FSSA Event Secretary, unable to come to the hunt tests, with me unable to judge and Bob having to judge at the last minute, Chuck, Renee and Neal Winters had to carry the load for the weekend. Many thanks to Committee Member Ann McNeill and Brian McNeill for all their help. Thanks to our judges Karen Lumb and Gretchen DeGroot in Field A and Bob Deihl and Matt Nordahl in Field B. We received many compliments for a well-run hunt test!

Two IWS were entered in the tests. Ann McNeill's Finn was entered in Senior and, to support the tests, our Lily was entered in Junior. Finn had a great time looking for birds and chasing the fly-aways! Lily did her usual exuberantly competent job and enjoyed herself immensely and came home with 2 Q's.

Thank you to the IWSCA Board for allowing us to run this Spaniel Hunt Test so that we could showcase the versatility of the IWS breed in the field!

Susan Sarracino-Deihl



Northwest Report

Greetings from the Pacific Northwest!

From Liz Liddle:

Welcome to Colorado.

Winter is at 6 am. Spring starts at 10 am.
Summer is at 2pm and Fall is around 4:30- ish.
Dress accordingly!

The 2025 National Specialty in Estes Park, Colorado, was one for the record books. Surrounded by non-stop beauty, the weather at any time of day could change, very much like the Pacific Northwest.



Maze in Frisbee mode

I had never driven that far solo before, so I checked with Sheryl Krohne to see if she wanted to loosely caravan with me from Spokane to Estes Park just in case either of us broke down. We met up at various points and stayed in contact during the trip in both directions.

Sheryl had her travel trailer and traveled with Raine. I traveled in my car with Fintan and Maze. They were great travelers and learned the routine of driving, exercise along the way, and hotels. We did a lot of truck stops and shopping center frisbee, just to get the dust out of their bobble heads.

For the Specialty, I send a huge shout out of appreciation for all of the club volunteers who made this Specialty a super success. I could never have imagined such a perfect site for a Specialty. Every detail was worked out, and it turned out to be a perfect event. I can't thank the team enough for all your hard work and dedication.

The hotel and staff were fantastic, as well as the Event Center, the trophies, ribbons, the food, the setups and the best part, great people and fabulous dogs.

From Patrice Dodd:

Well my biggest news is that in May, Carlin (Realta's Carlin O'Whistlestop RN JH MHUA CA SWME SWD TKN WD WDX) earned his 20th qualifying score in AKC Scent Work Detective. This is a rare achievement. Carlin is the first IWS to do this. Overall, only 74 dogs have gotten 20 Qs in Detective; that's about .27% of the dogs that compete or have competed in Scent Work. The AKC does not offer a title for this achievement, but I'm still thrilled.

Shortly afterward, I had the great honor to judge the IWSCA's inaugural AKC Scent Work trial at the National in Estes Park. It was a lot of fun, and special for me. Up till Then, I had never seen another IWS compete in Scent Work other than



Patrice and Carlin



Carlin and my dear departed Tooley. I thought the site under the rodeo bleachers gave me quite a range of interesting places to hide the odors. The weather was warm, sunny, and windy, all of which can create challenging puzzles for the searching dogs. We figured out how to get all the searches done in the shade and mostly out of the wind. I think the competitors were happy. And, I was quite pleased that we had quite a gallery of interested, inquisitive, and impressed observers.

From Sheryl Krohne:

Sheryl and Raine Krohne caravanned to Estes Park along with Liz Liddle and her 2 Irishers for the IWSCA event! It was great fun, with some long miles on I90. We talked by phone and stayed near each other, us in our trailer, Liz moteling it. We had stops for parking lot frisbee, wine, flatbread, and sleeping in Montana, Wyoming and CO. We saw lots of friends when we got to Estes Park, with amazing scenery, crazy weather (some good!), and attended great events with other magnificent and talented dogs and handlers. Thanks to Patrice Dodd (and committee) Raine got to compete in the first scent work trial at IWSCA nationals and got a first place. We also had fun in Rally where she got her first QQ toward RAE and was a member of the Lucky Charms team (thanks to Terry Kast). The auction was a blast, as usual, with lots of beautiful and fun things to bid on, and the awards banquet was wonderfully organized. Raine got 2024 Top BarnHunt dog, and the award was a beautiful wooden carved cutting board. Every day there, she got to go swimming in Estes Lake, next to the venue Park with lots of geese and nice local people and dogs. It was beautiful!! The trip home was partly stressful, with high winds and improvised stops when roads were temporarily closed, but we all eventually made it home safe. Thanks to the committee for an interesting, challenging, fun, and rewarding Nationals!!!



Sheryl and Liz



Sheryl and Raine



Sheryl and Raine



From Cat Shelby:

Irish Water Spaniel Club of America 2025 National adventure

With very young puppies on the ground this year, Stacy Duncan and I decided the best trip action was to be long driving days and only one overnight each way. That meant no fun stops at roadside attractions or sleuthing out a great local restaurant along the way. It was worth it, though. While I was on the show committee, my end of things was pretty much centered on doing the trophies for the Regional Specialty on Tuesday. Stacy and I worked in tandem with her doing all the ribbon work on both the Regional and National Specialties.



Getting ready for the show

She also did all of the work for the National trophies too. I think from both of our perspectives, we wanted to make this very memorable in the areas for which we were responsible. Almost everything went as planned. I spent two months making the regional trophies and the raffle item for those people that dressed in Western wear for Tuesday. Stacy made sure that our newest event, Scent Work, had very pretty ribbons to mark the occasion, too, along with great trophies.

With working so long on the glass trophies, I didn't have time to gear up to do a booth this year. It was a special treat to be able to go around, and actually have conversations with people; some that I barely knew other than a name.

Certainly, it was one of the few specialties in recent memory where that happened. I also had the time to watch more of the events, and I particularly liked observing Scent Work. I hope we can grow that in future specialties.

Our side jaunt to visit the Stanley Hotel was a mixed bag. I think we all hoped to find a ghost or two, but mostly just had the theatrics of our guide to entertain us.

Luna was in season, her first ever, so that created a slight deviation in some plans, but overall, even the drive home in miserable wind seemed to pass without incident. I'm grateful for those that were able to come, enjoyed the beauty of the Rockies and all of the wildlife. Estes Park is certainly a tourist town first, but it is charming just the same.

The merchants that donated to our goodie pails were most generous, and it was good to be able to patronize them a little. A special thank you to Melissa Gulley and family for making perfect fabric design snoods. Mary Westlake's human cookie treats were a hit and Ann McNeil's table favor treats were special too. The one thing I thought about upon leaving was that this specialty was unique in some ways. Mostly, with ample scheduling time, there was oodles of time to mingle and with fewer attendees, you had more opportunity to have more in-depth conversations.

For those that weren't able to attend, you missed one of the best in my 30+ years of attending specialties.



Stacy Duncan, Cat Shelby, and Michelle Cummings



From Loren Ripley:

Loren drove up to Colorado with her friend Madison. Being a mother of two little girls and a business owner, it looks like she got some excellent girl and dog time in!

We visited the redrocks with TT! (Tate, aka Tater Tot) We drive through 69 MPH winds in a jeep Wrangler passing multiple flipped trailers and trees. While in CO for 3 days we experienced 90-degree weather, snow and 69 Mph winds.

Madison and I unknowingly visited and ate at the Stanley Hotel where they had amazing views and a spectacular menu. It was an eerie but fun atmosphere.

3 ladies, 1Jeep Wrangler, throwback music, and amazing views.



Loren Ripley at the Hotel Estes Park



Loren (r) and Madison, and photos of a great trip



International Report

Hello everyone!

I hope this finds you and your curly kids well, enjoying the beautiful spring weather! The Irish Water Spaniel Association of Canada (IWSAC) has been working hard to bring exciting events your way to showcase our amazing breed, and I'm thrilled to share the following updates!

Ottawa Kennel Club – “Best Meet the Breed Booth”

The IWSAC competed for the “Best Meet the Breed Booth” at the Ottawa Kennel Club Show on Saturday, May 24, in a collaboration with the Field Spaniel Society of Canada.

Countdown to the 2025 IWSAC National Specialty!

The IWSAC National Specialty in Quebec City is almost here! Help spread the word by inviting friends to our Facebook group [IWSAC 2025 Quebec City Nationals | Facebook](#), which is 100% open to the public. For those not on Facebook, event details can be found on Canuck Dogs, or inquiries can be sent to irishwaterspanielcanada@gmail.com.

Judges Conformation: Denise Branch (ON), Murray Eason (AB), Raymond Lariviere (SK), Irene Latchford (ON)

Nationals: Sharon Luckhart (QC)

Sweeps: Sonya Earle (ON)

Obedience: Marie-J Cloutier (QC), Pierre Lambert (QC)

Rally: Marie-J Cloutier (QC), Pierre Lambert (QC), Marlene Richard (QC)

Host Hotel: [Host Hotel](#), [Hotel Sepia](#) Reservation block

First CKC Sprinter Event – August 24th

Following the National Specialty, we'll be heading to Maidstone, Saskatchewan for our first CKC Sprinter Event on August 24th! More information is available on Dogshow.ca and the Irish Water Spaniel Association of Canada Facebook Page.

DogShow.ca - Irish Water Spaniel Association of Canada [SPRINTER], Sun, Aug 24, 2025

Let's make these events a huge success—your support and enthusiasm keep this incredible breed thriving!

Any questions please do not hesitate to reach out by emailing us at Irishwaterspanielcanada@gmail.com

Charlene Schermers
President, IWSAC

From Jacquelyn Fussell:

Mr. Steel was out for a good time, shown once in red deer and garnished a group 2 under Avery Gaudin, then attempted rally for two shows and got 2 legs. He also picked up a group 3, and group 4 at CKOC under sporting dog judges Mel Saranchuck “Sporting Specialty Group 3” and Lynda Saranchuck all breed group 4. Girls Veni and Viper are now 10 years of age and are glad summer is here. Mr. Steel has now turned 7 years of age. The two delinquents are now 3 years old, and Ira is working on scent detection, and well, Rabbit has not found her niche, but enjoys travelling with Tony.



Public Relations and Education

The day was fun and successful! Watch this space in the next newsletter for the full story with pictures.



**BREED
SPOTLIGHT**

**IRISH
WATER
SPANIEL**

**SATURDAY
JUN 21
12-2 PM**

Meet and mingle with live dogs as breed experts share fascinating insights about their history, temperament, and unique traits.

 **the akc[®]
museum
of the dog**

Free for Members and included with General Admission.



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.**



We are so PROUD to INTRODUCE...



CHAI



Flintcrest Falling Leaves & Lattes



Sire: Aus Supreme CH./CH.
Whistlestop Special Agent CD RN
"GIBBS"

Dam: RBIS MBISS GCHB. Flintcrest
Flying Trapeze "KELLY"



Bred by Stacy Duncan and Cat Shelby
Owned by Michelle Cummings & Stacy Duncan



MBIS MNBIS MBIS GCHS FLINTCREST FIVE STAR GENERAL
RN FDC DJ CGC TKN

GRANT



Black and White or Color, there's no mistaking quality!
America's #1 Breed and #2 IWS All Breed IWS in 2024.
2x National Specialty, 8x BIS, 3x RBIS, 28 Group 1s and 6x BISS winner.



Owned by: Stacy Duncan and Cat Shelby

Bred by: Colleen McDaniel and Stacy Duncan
Photos by All Breed Photo – Tyler Crady

Handled by: Stacy Duncan



Not gone...
Just living through the
next generation.

“Odin”

June 2009 - May 2024



MBIS GCH CH Am/Can Mallyree's Mr Odin of Madrona RN

Sire: CH Poole's Ide Who'd a Thought It X Dam : CH Mallyree Kayla A'mhara RN

Breeder: Marion Hopkins & Pamela J Manus

Sire Owned by: GREG SINER

Owner: Sylvia Thistle-Miller

Handlers: David & Pat Gignac



Never underestimate the power of legacy,
It's a ripple effect, a torch,
passed from one generation to the next.

“Louie”

DOB Sept 2023



Lugh McCool's Celtic Reign At Mallyree

Sire: MBIS GCH CH Am/Can Mallyree's Mr Odin of Madrona RN
X Dam: Can CH Whistle Stop Wynner Takes All


Breeder: Sylvia Thistle-Miller

Dam's Breeder: Colleen McDaniel & Stacy Duncan

Sire's Breeder: Marion Hopkins & Pamela J Manus


Handlers: Stacy Duncan & David & Pat Gignac





STACY LYNN SMITH

Designer of the 2025 IWSCA logo



Illustrations, Portraits, Graphic Design, Murals



@STACYLYNNSMITHART

www.stacylynnsmith.com





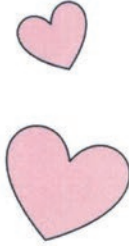
Introducing:

“Freya”

Fiain's Force of Nature

Orin x Jamie

Legacy of the Chaos Twins



In Norse mythology Freya (“The Lady”) is the goddess of war, love, and beauty. She is the daughter of the sea god Njord. In Viking culture, she embodies the perfect balance between femininity, power and grace.

I'm excited to see who she grows up to be!
Special thanks to Tiffany Schuffert for allowing Orin to become a part of my journey with this unique and special breed.

“Orin”

GCHS CH Kendall's Without A Second Thought CD BN RN THDN DJ CGC TKN

#1 Owner Handled IWS Lifetime
#1 Owner Handled IWS 2018-2022
Owner Handler Best in Show
Owner Handler Reserve Best in Show
Multiple Westminster Invitations
Multiple Group Placements
60+ Best of Breed Wins
40 Owner Handler Group Placements
NOHS Gold
CHIC# 120589

“Jamie”

Crispin's Double Shot This Girl Is On Fire CAX FCAT6 THDN RATO DMA DSA ASA HDN CGCA CGCU TKN FITB

(15 CH Points, needs a major)
Multiple Best of Breed Wins
Multiple Owner Handler Group Placements
Owner Handler Reserve Best in Show
Top 10 Owner Handled IWS: 2020-2024
NOHS Bronze
#1 IWS Fast CAT - 2019-2021, 2024
Ran on ESPN's Fastest Dogs USA 2019
IWS Dock Diving – Distance Rankings:
#2 - 2019-2021, #3 - 2022
IWS Dock Diving – Air Retrieve Rankings:
#1 - 2019, #2 - 2020
CHIC #184806





