

POTOMAC VALLEY  
IRISH WOLFHOUND  
*Club*



November 2018



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Upcoming Elections!

Slate of New Officers:  
Vice President: Susan Montgomery  
Board: Diane Reba  
Tammy Aube

We will need a member to replace Susan Montgomery for the duration of her board term, when she takes office as VP.



Upcoming meetings:  
November 18  
Tammy Aube, Ruther Glen VA

Holiday Party:  
12/9  
Dee & Gary Van Nest, Annapolis, MD



Upcoming Events:  
Military Bowl Parade  
12/31/18 8AM  
Annapolis

Druid Hill 5K  
12/15  
Contact Anne Flanigan FMI

## EVENT ETIQUETTE By Lisa McKinney

Each year, many times a year, our club is invited to participate in events such as Celtic Festivals, parades, public rescue events and even special events, like “Meet the Breeds” at conformation shows.

I want to take a minute to remind everyone about some basic “good etiquette” we should all follow at these events.

We are the representatives of our club and our breed. When people see us with our hounds, it might be the first, or possibly even the only, time they meet an Irish Wolfhound and its human companion. Please make sure the impressions you and your hounds give are ones honoring the traditions of their Irish heritage and reputation for being gentle giants. Please do not let your dog jump on people, and if at all possible, avoid stepping on people and collisions with children.

Our Wolfhounds should be under our full control at all times. Allowing them to “run loose” with leads dragging, or outside of some form of containment, is completely unacceptable. We have no way of knowing how individuals will react to encountering such a large dog. In addition, if the uncontrolled dog approaches a dog that is not familiar to it, there is absolutely no way of knowing how either dog will react. The last thing any breed needs, especially a giant breed, is a dog fight in the public eye. With breed specific legislation being almost the norm, we do not want to find our wonderful hounds on such a list, based on a public dog fight. Even worse, an innocent bystander could be injured, perhaps even seriously. Even if no fight takes place, it leaves the impression that our dogs are uncontrollable – a reputation no breed needs, or wants, in this day and age. This doesn’t even take into consideration the legal ramifications if someone is injured, either by a bite, or simply an exuberant dog knocking them down or stepping on them.

If non-club-members arrive with their Wolfhounds, please be friendly and help guide them in regards to providing the public with accurate information about our breed. That said, please be respectful at all times regarding conversations. It is impolite to interrupt and contradict people unless a reasonable segue can be found where alternative information can be offered without direct contradiction.

Please keep a careful watch over your hound. They have no way to verbalize to us that they are tired, over-stimulated, or just ready for some down time. However, their body language can often tell us that they’re either ready for a break, or, ready to go home. Please familiarize yourself with the signs of stress in dogs and ensure that you respond accordingly, if your dog is exhibiting such behavior.

(Added by the Editor) If your dog should misbehave, please remember that how you respond will also be seen by the public. Please don’t yell at your hound or hit them or otherwise behave in a manner that might leave a bad impression if seen by strangers.

If we all keep these things in mind, act appropriately and make sure our dogs are good citizens, we will continue to be invited to these important events, year after year and our hounds will continue to enjoy the respect and admiration of the public, and the event committee members.

(Added by the Editor) Bring a blanket or pad, water and water bowl, treats, waste bags, cleanup materials, an ex-pen if you think your dog would prefer not to be leashed for several hours, dog license and proof of rabies vaccine whenever attending an event.

Please see our “FAQ” on the next page and keep these basics in mind when talking to the public!

## FAQ

**Lifespan:** 7-9 Years on Average

**Health/Diseases:** Heart disease, cancer– especially bone cancer, bloat/torsion are the major causes of death. Some hounds are prone to pneumonia. Puppies should be tested for Liver Shunt, and breeding dogs should have IWCA recommended health tests.

**Feeding:** Use a quality food. Adults eat about 4-6 cups a day and should eat twice daily.

**Exercise:** No FORCED exercise for puppies. Let them exercise themselves. Even as adults, an IW should have ample room and time to play. A fenced yard is a must, and they need a long leash walk regularly.

**Shedding:** yes, some– year-round. Not as much as a Lab, but they have a lot of hair

**Colors:** any color from solid white to solid black, or brindle– dark stripes on a pale background. Grey brindle is the most common but no color is valued above others in the standard.

**Weight/Size/Growth Rate:** Minimum height is 32: and 120 lbs for a male, 30” and 105 for a female, but larger size isn't as important as good health, breeding and personality are. They weigh about a pound at birth and can be 100lbs by 9 months.

**Disposition:** Calm, steady, sweet, friendly, goofy. Bored puppies can be destructive; since they can reach so high, they may damage unexpected places. They are generally very good with children– WITH SUPERVISION and CAUTION.

**Cost (to buy, feed, vet):** \$ 2000 and up to buy. Triple the average dog, at the vet's. Plus higher costs for medicine, toys, bedding; the bigger car, the bigger sofa...

**Obedience/Performance/etc.:** Training has to be positive, sensible to the dog, and consistent. You MUST have a sense of humor. IWs are VERY smart, and able to do obedience if it's not boring. Lure coursing, obedience, Rally, therapy are common activities. Enforcement of gravity for sofas and beds is their favorite activity.

**Good with other animals:** yes, GENERALLY. MOST hounds do well with small dogs or cats in their house, but there are always exceptions. Many hounds will chase small animals outside. They are SIGHTHOUNDS, bred to hunt.

**Purpose:** They were bred to hunt wolves and other large prey. To keep the sofa from floating into space and keep you well loved and slurped.

## Passings

Van and Susan Morfit's Bebhionn (Bevin) passed just a few weeks before her 10th birthday from osteosarcoma.

Denise and John Franchetti tragically lost Bronagh very suddenly from a Bola, causing pneumothorax.

Susan and Bill Montgomery's Finn passed in November, at age 11.

Breeder and friend of the club, Donna Monahan, recently passed.

Long-time IW owner, and supporter of our show, Ben Carter, also recently passed.

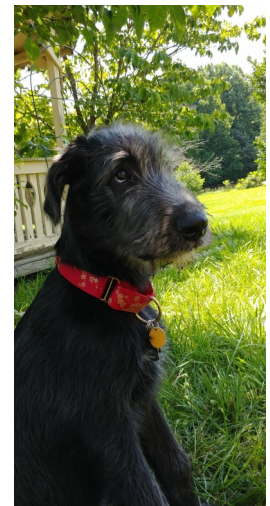
## NEWS

Congratulations to Christina Kallay on her new home!

Congratulations to Rob Maloy on his upcoming retirement. Condolences to all of us who will miss his smiling presence and strong back at festivals, fairs, and of course, our show.

Judith Chantelois & Hubby Brynley welcomed a puppy!

These are a few photos of our new puppy. His name is Lismore Leo Bloom and we call him Hurin (name of a great hero and warrior in Tolkien's The Silmarillion). He was born Feb 3rd and was one of a litter of 16! Breeders are Steve and Karen LeVan in Camden SC. His mother is US GCH Lismore Stonybrook Roxie Hart and Sire is US CH O'Lugh's Single Malt Scotch, who just won the IWCA national specialty show! Hurin has all the personality attributes of a typical wolfhound puppy and is driving our adult (non wolfhound) dogs a bit crazy. We love him very much and I hope I'll be able to take him to festivals and parades.



Welcome new members Aaron Foster and Amy Martin, and puppy Finley!

Welcome also, to prospective members Rien Alexander & Doug Rapport & Spencer; Amber Hennessey & Irie, and Jude Stopford and Augie!

A motley crew gathered in Warrenton, Virginia, recently to share laughs, frowns, frustrations, and progressive motions. Sitting there, looking across the table, to the left and right, down the heads of the table seeing each member in attendance, I reflect on what brought us together. It wasn't the food really, or the requirement to meet, but the fact that we love a hunting breed, the Irish Wolfhound. It really got me to think about the standard of our breed and the historical context of a hunting dog requiring endurance, for a functional, powerful specimen. I always hope present-day judges ask themselves if their exhibits are physically and mentally capable of performing a good day's work! Enjoy these photos of your club performing a good day's work!



## Old Dog Vestibular Syndrome

I am writing this because we learned a whole lot of things in January and February that I hope you will never need to know but everything is different with Irish Wolfhounds!

On Saturday night, January 6<sup>th</sup> about 9PM our 9 yo Irish Wolfhound Apollo climbed down off the couch, walked across the living room and collapsed in a heap – he couldn't get up and wouldn't lift his head. He didn't seem to be in pain but has had spinal issues and so after some time we gave him a Tramadol and several hours later gave him a second pill. This has been our standard protocol for 3-4 years when his back plays hell with him. I sat with him all night and in the AM we noticed that his eyes were rapidly flicking back and forth left to right.

We were frantic and thought that he had had a stroke. Knowing that I would first talk to our vet on Monday morning, I called Lap of Love to come on Monday afternoon to possibly euthanize him – we had lost our Cyanne to lymphoma in September and had had to wait a few hours longer than I wish we had to end her suffering.

Apollo didn't appear to be in any pain but he couldn't get off the floor and only wanted to lay on his left side with his head and shoulders up on a pillow. I talked with our emergency vet several times on Sunday but my husband and I couldn't imagine forcing Apollo onto a stretcher and then into the car in the bitter cold (it was 0° F) for a trip to the vet. By now we were getting clearer that this was neurological or something like that. He was not in pain, he was not nauseous, he just couldn't get up. Apollo weighed 176 lbs on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Lifting him was going to require 3 people, maybe 4.

He had collapsed on an 8x10' deep plush wool area rug and we put down shower curtain liners and put a belly band and diaper on him and tried to keep him as dry as we could. He was drinking water and would eat small amounts if we hand fed him – it was all very weird.

I talked with our vet on Monday at 8AM – said we had an emergency and that we had called Lap of Love. She said “WHOA! I think he has Old Dog Vestibular Syndrome – it's his inner ear fluid getting hard because of age -- he can recover BUT you have to keep turning him over so he doesn't get Compartment Syndrome and damage the muscles and nerves on the side he's laying on.” I sent her a video of his eye movement and she called back in minutes to confirm the diagnosis. Asked how long it would take to clear and she said “usually 3-7 days but with an IW, I'm not sure.” So, we put him on anti-nausea drugs to help with the vertigo and started a long, hard slog of nursing. One of us sat with him day and night for 5 nights straight.

He could not get off the floor and we were turning him using a beach towel every couple hours. Periodically, we would hoist him to his feet using the towel to see if he could stand.

On day 6 or 7, I thought maybe we should try acupuncture – our old acupuncture vet had retired but eventually we found his protégé and arranged for her to come several days later. In the meantime, we were doing 4-8 loads of laundry a day. He couldn't get up to go outside and we wanted him to drink as much as he wanted. The end result was that he developed diaper rash despite our best efforts – he didn't seem to be going downhill – he just couldn't get up.

When the acupuncture vet arrived on day 13 she was adamant that we get him outside and walking – I was scared to death and we almost couldn't get him back into the house – but, in hindsight, this was the turning point. He had been totally constipated and the walk in the yard (with 3 strong adults holding him up using a beach towel) started his gut working – he required a suppository to actually poop – but we were turning a corner.

Acupuncture clearly relieved some of his symptoms although his back feet were knuckling under when we held him up and we still weren't sure if he was going to recover his mobility. By day 21 we were exhausted, but he was showing signs of progress, sitting up, putting his head in our lap, and I told him that if he wasn't going to give up, we wouldn't either.

On day 28 he stood for the first time on all four feet without our support – he was super wobbly, but he did it!

By February 7<sup>th</sup> he was able to stand up by himself and go down the two steps into the yard.

Today, he is almost fully recovered, his back left foot still knuckles under on occasion, and when he's tired, his head leans to the left but he's happy and trots in the yard, eats well, and woofs at folks going by – he's doing great.

So, lessons we learned:

1. Having a stretcher is a good thing but I am thinking about getting a large, flat garden cart with big wheels – old, giant dogs are hard to move.
2. A Help-Em-Up harness is a godsend – we bought the u-shaped one with two handles and I can't believe how much of a difference it makes. I highly recommend this product. (<http://helpemup.com/>)
3. Our dog ramp for the car is too narrow to be really useful – because he was so dizzy, his gait and stance have got-

ten wider – we’re still trying to figure out how best to get him in the car, mostly we are just lifting him directly.

4. Belly bands are pretty useless – we found that putting diapers and pads under him and between his legs was really the only way to try to keep him dry. There has got to be a better way – please someone engineer something!

4.1 Lanolin and Silver Nitrate will clear diaper rash but it’s better to prevent it.

4.2 If your dog goes down and gets wet, gently shave him; it is much easier to keep bare skin clean and dry.

5. IWs should never be underestimated – we’ve had Wolfhounds continuously since 1991 and I’ve always said we would do anything for our dogs – turns out this time we were lucky enough to be able to do for Apollo **AND** he got better! This was a much, much happier outcome than osteo or lymphoma.

6. It takes a village – we are so grateful for good friends and neighbors – we needed lots of help getting through those 5 weeks.

7. Make sure you can reach your vet during off hours. I had our vet’s home phone number but hadn’t used it in years – then, when I needed her on that first Sunday, it turned out she had gone to only having a cell phone and I couldn’t reach her – test your numbers.

8. Know who will come and do acupuncture – we had to wait several days because we weren’t on the DVM’s roster of clients.

9. I had several foam beds that we tossed out when he recovered – I replaced them with a memory foam bed with a waterproof inner cover ([https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B07234KPTR/ref=oh\\_aui\\_detailpage\\_o07\\_s00?ie=UTF8&ppsc=1](https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B07234KPTR/ref=oh_aui_detailpage_o07_s00?ie=UTF8&ppsc=1)) This is the best dog bed we’ve ever had – and it’s gigantic.

10. Our wet vac died toward the end of his illness after much hard usage. We were wet vac’ing 3-4 times a day. Make sure your wet vac is tuned up. Ditto for your washing machine and dryer.

11. Trust your intuition about your dog – in hindsight we are so glad we didn’t move Apollo that first Sunday, it would have added torment to his illness and even though we were freaked out moving him seemed like a terrible idea.

12. Savor every minute, say your prayers, and thank your lucky stars for getting to live with these great dogs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Benjamin Bothwell





Grimm Finstad visits the Smithsonian.



Jodie & Kelly in March. Kelly passed in May