

EIWC chairperson's report

Membership

The EIWC currently has a representation of breed clubs from 15 different European countries plus England and Northern Ireland as associated members. This comes to a total number of members of 2957 individual members by the end of 2005. Switzerland has chosen to terminate their membership by December 31st. 2005. Fortunately, we can extend a warm welcome to our newest member, Finland, who joined the federation at the beginning of this year. Sweden has never officially terminated their membership and is currently tackling internal organizational problems, but will more than likely be discussing a "re-activating" of their EIWC membership, once they have settled their discrepancies. We will be looking forward to their decision.

Activities:

In 2004, we had the last Congress, the board meeting and the show hosted by the Dutch club, IERDIE, at a large horse facility, which served our purpose well.

Meetings:

It is my impression that in the past, a major obstacle for efficiency of the EIWC board has been the two-year period between the actual meetings. It is difficult to accomplish anything with such long intervals. Fortunately, the present board has on a regular basis dealt with various subjects via e-mail. It has been a great pleasure to work with the current members of the board, and I wish to thank you all for the constructive discussions we had over the past two years.

In March 2005, we had a small informal meeting at Crufts, where we discussed the finalizing of the magazine plans. Perhaps we could consider the possibility of meeting every year – alternating between Crufts and our congress. Many will be visiting Crufts anyway; this would cut down expenses of travelling to a certain degree.

The Magazine:

I presented the idea of publishing an EIWC magazine at the meeting in Holland in 2004. This was easier said than done. Later, I asked the various delegates by e-mail to present the idea to their national breeding clubs in the hope of finding resourceful persons to undertake the task of compiling and printing such a publication. The cost of a quality publication is rather steep, and which the EIWC economy couldn't undertake single-handedly at present.

Luckily a somewhat controversial, but workable model was born. Carolyn Dean, of the Irish Wolfhound Foundation Giftshop, offered the EIWC a platform in her IW World publication, which was then on the drawing board. This generous offer would not cost our organization a single Euro. So far, we have two beautiful issues out. Carolyn Dean has created an outstanding publication, which is received with praise and awe all over the IW world so far. I sincerely hope that the members will continue to support this magazine by subscribing and with contributions. We would appreciate it if all the member countries would consider informing the readers of their current club activities twice a year.

The website:

Last year in July, we had to say good bye to the web-master of the EIWC site, Annick Smedt: We are grateful for the work, which she did for the federation. In August of last year, we found a new webmaster and, a warm "thank you" to Melitta Kuhless for taking on this task.

The EIWC longevity/health database:

We decided that the federation creates a longevity and health database. This is a work in progress, and I believe that we will get a presentation of the work so far on this occasion. There are many IW enthusiasts around the World, who are working with similar databases on various levels.

Other Databases Worldwide

There is **Nina Gottsch** in the USA, who has an extensive pedigree database, with approximately 86.000 dogs – dating back to 1850's. She is working on putting the database on-line within the near future. For now, one can order specific pedigrees from Gottsch.

Anne Janis, USA, likewise has an extensive database with almost 92.000 dogs registered. Her work is mainly concentrated on health issues for which the pedigrees are a necessity. She offers a service to all breeders, which I feel is a valuable guiding tool in planned breeding: A breeder can contact her via e-mail and ask for a risk analysis for a contemplated combination. The risk analysis is for Seizures, PCD (rhinitis), PRA, and recurring pneumonia and there is currently a project in the making for lymphoma.

Amy Andre in Australia has a pedigree database consisting of 52.000 dogs. Her database also contains health and longevity information

Martha Ryan in the US has an extensive database, which is accessible only for certain breeders. There is an annual fee of US. \$ 60,00- for the right to use this database.

The Dutch have created a health database.

Countless hours go into this kind of work. It would be wonderful, if the people behind such efforts could somehow join forces across the continents to a larger degree than is the case today; but who knows what the future will bring.

Irish Wolfhound health research World Wide:

As with the situation of the numerous databases, we also have a wide variety of IW health related research projects going on in the World, many of these overlap and some compete. This is not new aspect of scientific work, but a change of focus away from this slightly counterproductive approach to problem solving could prove more beneficial – unless this fierce competition gives birth to a brilliant new insight and knowledge.

It is my sincere hope, that in the future there will be a gradual change of focus towards the insight and knowledge of the health and betterment of the breed, rather than prestige, PhDs and who gets there first.

It is ridiculous that people can send blood to three or four different research institutions undertaking more or less the same research. International cooperation could perhaps get the results

EIWC connecting people

I will quote a paragraph in the EIWC Articles of Association:

“The purpose of the EIWC shall be to bring together, within a single framework, the Irish Wolfhound clubs or associations from as many European countries as possible, to make joint efforts

to promote and improve the breed, and to foster friendship among Irish Wolfhound enthusiasts throughout the world."

Our job is connecting those who share a common interest and goals, even outside Europe.

In my opinion, EIWC carries a great responsibility in the role as the educator and communicator through informing about ongoing research and other projects both in the magazine and on the website.

I should like to envision a future where the work for our common goals of longevity, optimal health, and betterment of our breed transcends all national borders in this ever-shrinking world of modern communication.

Pernille MONBERG