

# MEET THE CANDIDATES!

BECOME ONE WITH THE HUNT.

## FOR THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT NOMINATED BY THE E.C. TIM OTTO

Early last summer Dave Trahan called to tell me that, after 9 years as President, he was going to step down, and asked me if I would consider running for President. Later that summer, Vice President Bob Hauser and Treasurer Rick Holt said that they were “retiring” from the EC. As I considered whether to run, I also considered who I would work with most productively. After much reflection, I asked Andy Doak to run for VP and Angie Coenen to run again as Secretary because we have worked so well together for the past 5 years. Moreover, John Wolfe has played a critically important role in advising the Finance Committee for the past 6 years, so he was a “natural” for the position of Treasurer. At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee unanimously nominated the four of us for elected office. Together we hope to continue working with the entire EC and the membership to further NAVHDA’s core mission: To foster, promote, and improve the versatile hunting dog in North America.

I joined NAVHDA 22 years ago for the same reasons most members do: I wanted a better-trained pointing dog, my breeder suggested NAVHDA, I checked it out, and when I did, I was hooked. I quickly began getting more involved organizationally, serving for several years as Test Secretary and then Training Director for the DelVal Chapter. I joined the Apprentice Judge program in my 4<sup>th</sup> year and became a Judge 2 years later, a Senior Judge several years after that, and ultimately an Invitational Judge and an Aims & Rules Clinic Leader. I love the challenge of working with groups, discussing issues from different perspectives, and eventually coming to a consensus. I’ve always felt that group decisions are best made through amicable discussion of sometimes difficult topics, often requiring compromise. I’ve found this to be true both in judging and with my colleagues on the Executive Committee.

I was honored when Dave Trahan asked me to join the Executive Committee as Director of Publications in 2017. Over the past 5.5 years, we have made what I think is some incredible progress. With respect to the magazine, over the past several years we published more articles with more unique authors, and this year a “Bonus Training Issue” was sent to all members. Last year our Facebook posts reached over 407,000 people, almost doubling our exposure compared to 2020! NAVHDA’s Instagram feed (@navhdainternational) is also very active, with over 125 posts in 2021 and just short of 10,000 “Followers.” We also started a NAVHDA YouTube chan-

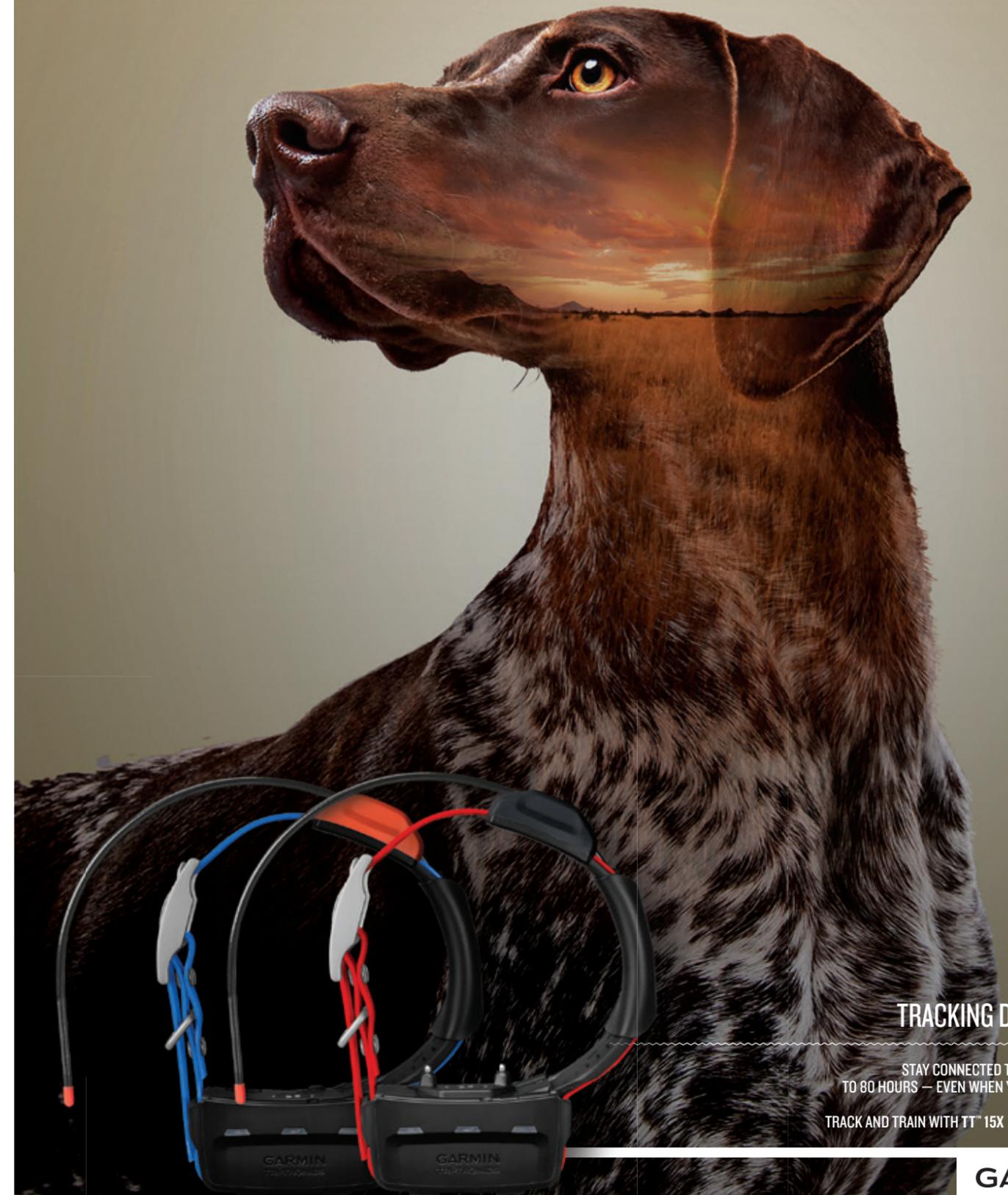


nel! NAVHDA International’s website, totally revamped two years ago, remains tremendously active. Last year we had over 180,000 “hits,” *with over half of those being first time visitors!*

In addition to my work on the VHD, Social Media, and the website, over the past few years I have worked very closely with Andy Doak and the entire EC to develop the Training Seminar Assistance Program and the New Chapter Support Program. I’ve also worked closely with our new Director of IT Randy Hanson, who has made several behind the scenes changes to our IT infrastructure and is planning new changes that should be more visible in the next few years. I am particularly pleased to have worked together with past President Marilyn Vetter and the entire EC on development of our Strategic Plan, which was based largely on member input during a special discussion session at the 2019 Annual Meeting. NAVHDA’s success in meeting the vast majority of the goals set out in that Strategic Plan were described in an article by Rick Holt last month. Finally, I’m proud to have been involved in recruiting our new Managing Director Kim Arnett, who is doing an incredible job! I’m working very closely with Kim now on a number of projects and look forward to doing so for the next several years.

NAVHDA has experienced unparalleled growth over the past several years, due largely to our dedicated breeders and the unending efforts of our local chapters. This success is a direct reflection on the quality of our organization, and is something we should all be proud of. However, while growth is good for any organization, it can also present challenges. Our primary goal will be to ensure that we meet those challenges and that our infrastructure can support this growth in the future. As President, and with your help, our priorities will be to:

- Enhance our IT infrastructure so we can better serve members’ needs as digital demands and opportunities increase. These planned improvements include more streamlined member, dog, and litter registrations, development of IT solutions to reduce the paperwork burden on Chapter Test Secretaries and Office Staff, improved



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functionality of our searchable testing and registration databases, and a total revamp of the NAVHDA store.

- Review and update NAVHDA's strategic plan.
- Conduct regular meetings between chapter leadership and NAVHDA Executive Committee members to better understand chapter issues and dynamics.
- Continue to develop creative programs to build our judging cadre while maintaining our highest standards.
- Facilitate the success of new and existing chapters.
- Expand on opportunities to increase NAVHDA's visibility and reputation through social media.
- Ensure that participation in NAVHDA events is a welcoming experience for *all* members through Panel Discussions and *VHD* articles focusing on "Inclusion" (similar to the "Chapters of Excellence" and "Creating

Positive Experiences" discussions following last year's Annual Meeting and summarized in the May and June *VHD*).

Some of you know that I recently retired, having been a Professor of Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience at Rutgers University for almost 30 years, teaching, doing research, and publishing almost 100 articles on brain physiology. I loved my work, and with retirement comes the luxury of more time available to devote to other things I love, especially NAVHDA. And while I love NAVHDA as it is, I recognize that we can always improve.

I am proud of our membership's active role in NAVHDA's collective efforts and successes, and I look forward to working with you all.

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**FOR THE OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT  
NOMINATED BY THE E.C.  
ANDY DOAK**

When Tim Otto decided to run for President of NAVHDA International, he asked that I run alongside him as Vice President. I did not take the decision lightly, and after lengthy consideration and unanimous support from my fellow NAVHDA Executive Council members, I agreed to run. NAVHDA prospers when individuals work together as a team and with this in mind, I know we can make a positive difference to strengthen the premier sporting dog organization for sportsmen and sportswomen.

My hands-on approach at the local and International levels provides a unique perspective in understanding how NAVHDA functions at all levels and our challenges as we grow. The principles I live by are hard work, honesty, forward thinking, accountability, professionalism and dedication to duty. If elected as Vice President, NAVHDA members and staff will receive nothing less from me.

**Local Chapter Service:** I joined the Sebecook Chapter 15 years ago and my fellow members will tell you I am one of the last volunteers standing when events finish. I've spent 12 years in chapter leadership positions, serving as Director of Testing for 2 years, Vice President for 2 years, and President for the last 8 years. My proudest accomplishment as President was leading a challenging but successful 5-year fundraising effort to purchase chapter training grounds that included hosting the largest NAVHDA International Annual Meeting to date in Maine. Dedicated NAVHDA members pulled



together to make this happen, and we did it together! I'm now serving my last year as President and I believe passing the torch is necessary to develop new leadership and growth.

**NAVHDA International Youth Committee Chair (2016-2018):** After the establishment of the NAVHDA Youth Endowment Fund, I was asked to join the newly established Youth Committee. Within one year, I was asked to chair the committee, managing all items related to NAVHDA's Youth Programs. This was the early stage of development for the Youth Programs, and I focused on expanding involvement overall, developing the committee into more active regional representation, and improving the administrative process to apply for the programs. Along with dedicated Youth Commit-

tee members, the programs have expanded greatly and many of the processes developed under my guidance are still used today.

**NAVHDA International - Director of Promotions (2018 to Present):** In mid-2018, the NAVHDA EC asked me to serve as Director of Promotions. As our By-Laws state, I am responsible for aiding in and encouraging the development of local chapters and for promoting membership in the corporation, as well as the corporation itself. I am also responsible for managing our corporate sponsor and conservation partner relationships. I manage the Promotions Committee and sit on our IT Infrastructure Committee. Highlights of our accomplishments include:

- Together with the Promotions Committee, I assisted with the development of 12 new chapters
- Working alongside EC members, I was heavily involved in the development of the *New Chapter Assistance Program*, the *Training Seminar Assistance Program*, and the *Chapter Mentor Program*. All programs are designed to provide financial and educational support to new and existing chapters.
- Expanded our partnership with Pheasants Forever, and managed NAVHDA's participation in National Pheasant Fest for the last 4 years.
- Participated in the planning of every NAVHDA Annual Meeting & Invitational since 2019.
- Oversaw the creation of the Natural Ability Test Video, an educational tool viewed over 65,000 times, providing an all-encompassing guide to the NA test.

**Future Goals as Vice President: Together with the EC, I will:**

- **Improve Infrastructure:** We will strive to ensure training and testing needs of our members are met by continuing to promote new chapter growth and creating future specialty programs. I will assist in an annual review of the *Apprentice Judge Support Program* to ensure the number of judges increases without compromising our high standards, and continue to sit on the IT Committee to ensure improvement of our IT infrastructure, including streamlining our online processes, adding valuable information to our searchable data bases, and improving the test entry process.

- **Participate in updating NAVHDA's Strategic Plan:** As with our 2019 Strategic Plan that was based on member input, I will work with the entire EC to assess members' needs and visions of NAVHDA's future by developing membership surveys, holding special sessions at annual meetings, and seeking input at our regular meetings with chapter leaders.
- **Continue Membership Outreach:** I will create annual surveys of the membership, and actively participate in regular meetings between our Chapter leaders and our Managing Director to understand local concerns. Along with other EC members, I will connect with every NAVHDA Judge annually to hear your feedback.
- **Expand Current and Future Partnerships:** I will deepen our relationships with our current sponsors and cultivate additional sponsor and partnership opportunities that will benefit NAVHDA's members.

**About Me**

My wife and I currently own 3 different NAVHDA breeds, which we have both passed successfully at all levels of the testing system, including the Invitational. Our time in the Fall is spent together in a duck blind, or chasing grouse and woodcock. I am a very active NAVHDA judge, judging throughout the US and Canada. Professionally, I have spent the last 18 years in the power generation and marine industries, which includes travel to Europe, Africa, and South America. I have worked alongside Navy personnel on U.S. fast attack class submarines as a Mechanical Engineer for the Department of Defense at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Currently, I am the Operations/Plant Manager at Bingham Wind Farm, the largest utility scale wind power generation facility in New England, and responsible for all site operations, budget management and regulations. This broad work experience on a global scale has enabled me to understand the importance of working as a team through difficult situations and understand differing viewpoints and cultures. I attended Maine Maritime Academy, earning a B.S. in Marine Engineering Technology, graduating Magna Cum Laude and ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in my major. Deep in traditions of honor, integrity and discipline through a regimented and structured program, I credit my time there in developing lifelong work ethic and leadership skills.

**FOR THE OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT  
NOMINATED BY PETITION  
TERRY WILSON**

**NAVHDA BACKGROUND**

I have been an active NAVHDA member for 16 years on both local and International levels. As a longtime member of the Yankee Chapter, I volunteer regularly as a gunner and bird planter. I have trained and tested my German wirehairs to multiple NA and UT prizes and Versatile Champion titles. I am a NAVHDA judge and an Invitational volunteer.

Over the years I have helped many chapters through fundraising and donations for their programs, equipment, and other major purchases. I arranged and underwrote the Wingshooting USA filming of the 2015 Invitational. I co-designed and underwrote the large display panels used in the NAVHDA Pheasant Fest booth, the annual meeting, and elsewhere.

My company, Ugly Dog Hunting, has been a NAVHDA International corporate sponsor for 16 years and an event donor for the Annual Meetings and Invitationals.

Seven years ago, I co-founded the NAVHDA Youth Endowment Fund – the catalyst for two out of the three NAVHDA youth programs today.

**PLATFORM**

*I am running independently, not aligned with anyone else running for a NAVHDA office.*

- Corporate Sponsors - We have four corporate sponsors. There is no reason why we cannot add three or four more. An organization with 11,000 members offers significant impact to potential sponsors in terms of exposure and reach. Additional sponsors would not only bring in funds but would also broaden NAVHDA's visibility. As VP, I would use my industry contacts in the wingshooting and hunting dog community to help bring in more corporate sponsors.
- Conservation Partners - Many of our members hunt waterfowl and support Ducks Unlimited. I would work hard to create a partnership with DU and more conservation organizations. As with our current partners, sharing support and chapter connections would be a win-win situation for all.
- Invitational – Due to the increase in yearly participants, the Invitational faces tremendous pressure to meet its needs for staffing, grounds, and funding. I have heard many feasible options for relieving that pressure. I would work with the EC, Invitational Committee, chapter leaders, members, and the Managing Director to develop a fair, balanced plan accommodating more than one event per year and making the Invitational more accessible to members in different regions.
- Apprentice Judge Scholarship Program – With local chapter support and International's program com-



bined, our ability to attract and retain new apprentices will be substantial. Several chapters offer their own apprentice judge scholarships. I would help other local chapters set up similar programs.

- Anti-Hunting Dog Legislation – Every year, a number of states propose legislation that would inhibit or outright ban hunting with dogs. These bills usually address the “low-hanging fruit” such as bear or coyote dogs, acknowledging that rabbit and bird dogs would be next. I would set up a network reaching out to other dog clubs and hunting organizations to share information on pending bills and collaborate in the fight for our right to breed, own, train, and hunt with our dogs.

**THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MOVING FORWARD**

The dramatic growth of NAVHDA's membership necessitates growth in its leadership. If I've learned one thing on the RGS/AWS Board, it is that the member-volunteers are the backbone of an organization like ours.

The Executive Council has led NAVHDA well over the years in many ways, but given the size and diversity of our current membership, the EC should evolve its leadership style into one with far greater trust in the perspectives and skills of both our Managing Director and chapter leaders.

According to NAVHDA Bylaws, each newly elected or re-elected President appoints the Directors with approval by vote of the officers. Thus, just four people pick the rest of the EC. In the past, individuals from the general membership have not been encouraged to apply for these directorships. I hope many of the talented and experienced members across the country will step up and ask to be considered for these positions. NAVHDA has a terrific untapped resource there from which to draw its very best leaders.

*What would I bring to the EC?*

With well over a decade on the Board of Directors of RGS as well as involvement with other conservation and wingshooting organizations, I am skilled at solving problems based on input from the membership rather than solely through the perspective of the board. I also know a

board is most effective when it works in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration.

Having worked my entire career in the corporate world, I understand the reciprocal value of sponsorships. I know how to talk to potential sponsors, and I have insider's knowledge of the different sectors of our sporting dog community – merchandisers, habitat organizations, legislative groups, and, of course, hunting dog organizations. This gives me a unique view of NAVHDA's place in this community as we continue to evolve as one of the best hunting dog organizations in the country.

**BIO**

**NAVHDA Life Member**

**Business Owner**

- Founder and owner of the Ugly Dog Hunting Company (20+ years), wingshooting and hunting dog supply retailer
- Before Ugly Dog, I worked in several different industries including ten years as Purchasing Director for

**FOR THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
INCUMBENT  
ANGIE COENEN**

Thank you to the membership for allowing me to be your Secretary for the last three years. As most would say, the time has flown by, and I couldn't be prouder of the board's work. We are just about at the end of our three-year strategic plan and are now in the planning stages of creating a new strategic plan. The continued growth of our organization is showing that our efforts are working.

One of my roles as the Secretary is executing the election every three years. This year we will be conducting the online election based on the membership's approval from the 2019 bylaw change. Please watch for more information from International on the upcoming electronic election. Another role as the Secretary is planning and executing the annual meeting. In January 2023, we look forward to seeing everyone in South Dakota, where the Mid-West Tri-State Chapter will be hosting our in-person meeting. It has been too long since we all have had the opportunity to see each other in person. I can't wait to see you all.

For the last three years, I have been the liaison to the board for the NAVHDA Invitational test. When I was asked to be the board liaison for the Invitational, I formed a committee that has been instrumental in planning and executing the Invitational. I had appointed Deb Stott as the Invitational Coordinator, and she had hit the ground running, putting together a very successful 2021 Invitational in Iowa. Deb and the Invitational Committee have been working hard to organize our first

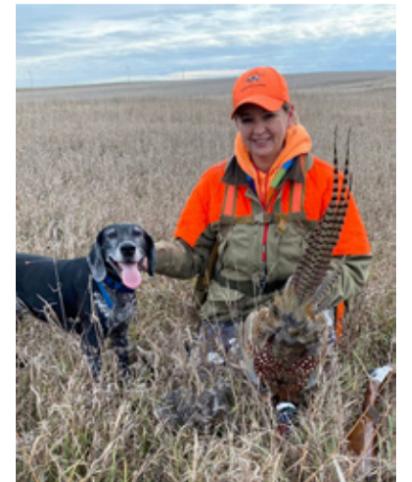
the Rossignol Ski Company. In 1990, I formed Carts Vermont, manufacturing big-wheel wooden garden carts. Upon selling the company in 2000, I launched Ugly Dog, crediting its inspiration to Scrub, my first German wirehair.

**Conservation Advocate**

- Former chair and current member of the Board of Directors of the Ruffed Grouse Society / American Woodcock Society
- Life member of Ducks Unlimited
- Life member of Pheasants Forever
- Life member of Quail Forever
- Chair of the Green Mountain Chapter of RGS / AWS

**Co-Founder of the Track2wing Project**

- Track2wing grants Action trackchairs to individuals with mobility challenges who currently hunt or train with hunting dogs or would like to do so. Since its inception in 2020, Track2wing has granted 29 trackchairs to hunters across the country, many of whom are or have become NAVHDA members.



West Invitational in New Mexico. We are ready and can't wait to put on the 2022 Invitational, the premier dog event of our organization.

If you haven't met me, most people would say I eat and breathe NAVHDA, and they are correct! I owe my hunting dogs, and this organization, so very much. Because of the NAVHDA organization, I am a better judge and person. I have been a NAVHDA judge for almost 12 years, a senior judge for nearly seven years, and to top off, I am an Invitational judge. My involvement in NAVHDA has also given me the tools to advance my professional goals and career. As I write this, I reflect on all I have accomplished, and all the work left to be done. This is my 12<sup>th</sup> year as a NAVHDA judge; I have judged at 191 testing days for 1506 dogs. I sit back and think of the time, making me smile and wonder how I got this far. Time flies, and our beloved bird dogs leave us way too early, but what I do know is that I am blessed to be a part of this organization, and I am very thankful for the friends and bird dogs that have enriched my life.

**FOR THE OFFICE OF  
TREASURER  
NOMINATED BY  
THE E.C.  
JOHN WOLFE**

After coaching baseball for 10 years my wife asked me what I was going to do now. She suggested becoming an umpire, and my response was that I hate umpires, so she said why don't you get the GSP that you have been wanting, so I did. About 10 years ago I got Briggs and joined NAVHDA and was bitten by the bug. I now have 3 dogs: Briggs, Birdie, and Gator. Like many of you, I consider some of my closest friends to be NAVHDA folk and I simply love it, just ask my wife. After going to her first test with me, on the way home Sunday evening, she looked over at me and said "I get it, I understand why you love this so much. They are such a great group of people...NAVHDA."

After being in NAVHDA for a few years, I wanted to do more, so I entered the apprentice judge program and was approved as a judge in 2018. I am currently in the acting senior judge program. About 5 years



ago, I was asked by our current Treasurer Rick Holt to join NAVHDA's newly-formed finance committee. I was instrumental in writing the Investment Policy and provided guidance regarding investment strategies that would provide the best return with the lowest risk. What makes me qualified to run for Treasurer? I have been in the financial industry most of my life. I am currently the Chief Financial Officer for the American Philosophical Society, a non-profit organization founded by Benjamin Franklin over 275 years ago, where I have worked for over 20 years. I manage an endowment investment fund of over \$250 million and an annual operating budget of over \$10 million. I am also responsible for the administrative operations which include reviewing contracts, legal documents as well many other things. Locally, I have served as Test Secretary, and Training Director, and I am currently the Treasurer for the Keystone Chapter in Pennsylvania. I am excited to have this opportunity to continue fostering and guiding NAVHDA's financial growth, and to work together with Tim Otto, Andy Doak, Angie Coenen, the entire EC, and the membership to continue building our great organization. As your new Treasurer, I would hope to keep NAVHDA on the path of continued growth as Rick has done so well for the last 6 years. I am honored to have the opportunity to run for the position of Treasurer and would be honored to serve as your Treasurer.

# MANAGING DIRECTOR SIX MONTH UPDATE

By Kimberley Arnett  
NAVHDA Managing Director

It has now been over six months since I became the Managing Director of NAVHDA, just a blip of time within my 25-year career. I came into this position with what I feel is a pretty strong arsenal of skills and excited to take on the challenge of the role. As I expected, my initial responsibilities included updating a number of documents, implementing a goal system for staff, and modernizing the employee handbook. The unknown, always difficult to determine with any new position, was the actual atmosphere of the organization.

From my very first week here at NAVHDA, I have felt like part of a team. I have been given both the opportunity and the trust to jump in headfirst from day one.

In such a short period of time, I have had the pleasure to speak with many of the chapter presidents, test secretaries, and members, gaining a unique perspective of NAVHDA. Clearly represented in each of these encounters has been the pride and ownership NAVHDA members have in the organization. Whether it be a discussion with the presidents about areas NAVHDA could focus on, test secretaries suggesting their ideas for updating technology to make their process easier, or concerns/questions raised by individual members, I have learned from and truly enjoyed each interaction.

What I truly appreciate, and what makes this knowledge actionable, is the openness and abilities of the Executive Council to discuss and brainstorm ideas/solutions. Outcomes of those meetings have led to some pretty exciting new programs for NAVHDA members such as the New Chapter Support Program, the Apprentice Judge Incentive Program, and the Chapter Mentor Program.

What's next on my agenda? Every day brings new objectives. For now, the plans include continuing to meet regularly with chapter leaders to better understand their issues and concerns, managing the upcoming online election, working together with the EC to update our technology, creating a NAVHDA Utility video, and developing our next strategic plan.

In summary, I would like to thank everyone who has reached out with ideas, concerns, and NAVHDA history. Learning about the organization through its members has been ideal. I would like to throw in that attending my first Aims & Rules Clinic is where I undeniably gained the best perspective of what NAVHDA is all about. I developed a deep respect for both our Judges and all the people volunteering for NAVHDA events. It is exhausting both mentally and physically! I highly encourage all members to take an Aims & Rules clinic. 🐾



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