

ISBONA

Icelandic Sheep Breeders of No. America



2019 ISBONA Board Candidates

Election October 12-16, 2018

CYNTHIA Berg



Hello Members. My name is Cynthia Berg, Head Shepherdess at Green Heart Farm in Springfield, Vermont.

We have been raising registered, horned Icelandic Sheep since the summer of 2013. We chose the Icelandic breed for a multitude of reasons after extensive research. Along with their triple purpose qualities, I absolutely fell in love with their appearance and their personalities; I truly appreciate their independence! We started with four ewes and two rams our first year, quickly grew up to almost 40 breeding ewes and adjusted this summer to about 15 breeding ewes for this fall.

We strive for a balanced holistic approach to raising sheep and stewarding this land with as little chemical inputs as possible. Along with proper conformation, we focus a great deal on parasite resistance in our flock. Our approach begins with preventative practices such as frequent rotational grazing, high quality minerals and herbal supplements, and a strict culling practice. It is our goal to never have to deworm our flock. We recognize it will take time and we are certainly on a learning curve, but we're willing to stay the course.

I have been working with plant medicine since my late 20's (wow, that's a long time now!) and have studied herbalism in a variety of venues with teachers from all over the world. My training also includes a completed Herbal Apprenticeship of almost 300 hours. Although the training was not specific to animals, the majority is transferable, and we have found this knowledge to be invaluable in our flock/land management. Before I transitioned to being a full-time shepherdess, I had a busy, thriving practice in Special Education Advocacy where I assisted parents in navigating the often complicated education system of regulations, law, and psycho-educational evaluations for their children. My hope is to utilize these skills as a board member.

I have been blessed to have one of the most devoted Icelandic Sheep breeders as a mentor from the start. I'd like to give back to this community by supporting and sharing my time and energy in a way that can help our association grow and prosper in the best way possible for the greater whole. I recognize that for as many breeders/members, there are as many unique approaches to shepherding and farming. It's often in those differences that we find unexpected jewels if we but only listen closely with an open mind and heart. That is what I intend to bring to the board in some capacity, as well as an eagerness to be a productive member with a commitment to working toward the best association we can be.

DAWN Nicholson



Hello, my name is Dawn Nicholson and I am the owner and head shepherdess of Stonecroft Icelandics!

Stonecroft is a small family farm nestled in the great northwoods of Wisconsin where we raise Icelandic sheep, cattle, and a variety of chickens, turkeys, and bees. Our focus is on raising healthy and parasite resistant Icelandic breeding stock with vigorous growing lambs, luxurious fleece and exceptional genetics to back them up. It's important to us to raise quality animals that have lived a quality life.

My shepherding adventure started in 2011 when my husband retired after 27 years in the Army. Though I had never been a farm girl, I was determined to jump in with both feet. What had started as a small group of 4 Icelandics, quickly expanded into a colorful registered flock of 40. Through the ups and downs of farm life, and as my flock grew, so did my knowledge. I've experienced the joy of a fresh born lamb and the loss of a cherished breeder due to illness.

Over the years, I've had the great privilege of paying it forward by mentoring up-and-coming breeders, assisting them with issues such as birthing difficulties and various illnesses. There is something very rewarding about helping a fellow shepherd in need.

Currently, I am working as the sheep, goat, exotic and poultry superintendent for the Rusk County Jr. Fair. It is such a wonderful experience working with all the 4H and FFA kids from kindergarten age all the way up to high school seniors. Through barn set up, clerking the shows, livestock auction, to the comforting of a child as they loaded up their market animals onto the trailer. The whole experience is truly humbling. This is the kind of experience and knowledge that I hope to bring to the board.

Thank you for your consideration.

ELAINE Clark



Hello. Many of you may know me by name, Elaine Clark, or our farm, Frelsi Farm Icelandics. I am a shepherd here in southern Maine and have been raising Icelandic sheep for 23 years. It has been my privilege to be a member of the board of directors for ISBONA over the years. I am currently the president of that board . I am seeking another term in order to help see through the transition of the organization to being the breed association for the Icelandic sheep in the United States and to help the new board members that you elect to settle in to the responsibilities of a director position, so that they can integrate their talents and energy and ideas in an organized and efficient manner.

ISBONA has been a significant part of my life since its beginning; before it had an actual name and formal board of directors. These wonderful sheep are thriving here in North America, in ways and numbers we had only dreamed possible. The goals I see for ISBONA as most important are, 1)the protection and oversight of the breed, 2) the establishment of ISBONA as a registry for the Icelandic sheep in the US that provides for continued use of our current registrar and provides us with access to many of the same type of benefits our fellow shepherds in Canada enjoy, 3) supporting and educating a strong community of shepherds ,and 4) the continued congenial and cooperative relationship with our fellow shepherds in Canada.

I do want to stress the importance of voting in this election. There are several candidates and all have valuable experience and talent to offer to your organization. Our By-laws state that “For the election to be considered valid, votes must be cast by 1/3 of the eligible voting membership of ISBONA as of the date of record.” This will be our first online ballot and I want to see that this change makes the procedure simple and efficient for all of us.

JUSTIN Audet



My name is Justin Audet, I'm from Rimouski, Quebec province (French-speaking Canadian). I have a Bachelor's degree in Counseling and a Master's degree in Program Evaluation. I work as a guidance counselor at Rimouski College.

My wife and I co-own Le Biscornu farm and we have been raising Icelandic sheep for the last 14 years. Our farm is focused on producing high performance genetics. Our flock is enrolled in a genetic evaluation program (Genovis) since 2004. In 2006 we started VAI and in 2008 we started using ultrasound loin evaluation. We are also certified Grassfed and Animal Welfare Approved by AGW.

I wish to join ISBONA's board of directors to help preserve all the characteristics of this breed as well as to preserve the North American character of our association.

KATHY Taft Boyden



Hello fellow Icelandic shepherds and ISBONA members. My name is Kathy Taft Boyden. Many of you already know me, but if not, I will tell you a little about myself: I, together with my husband and four children, operate Kind Horn Farm, a certified organic Vermont hill farm. We are currently in our 11th year with these wonderful sheep. Since the beginning of our time raising Icelandics, our goal has been to raise top quality breeding stock; provide nutritious, clean grass-fed meat to our local community; and to create boutique yarns and other fiber products from our wool. We started importing semen from Iceland in 2009 in order to increase the muscling/ carcass value on the sheep and to introduce the unique genetics available through the AI sires. We have used a combination of farm rams and AI sires every year since 2009. Our farm land can support about 30 breeding ewes and lambs, so we carry about 100 sheep in summer.

My family goes back many generations in farming here in Vermont. I was raised milking cows on our registered Holstein dairy farm. I have a BA in French Studies and International Relations from Smith College and studied in France during my junior year. After college, I worked in advertising for some years, both in USA and Canada. I have been a full time mom since our first children were babies. When the older children were really small, I began dreaming and planning a return to my farming roots. Kind Horn Farm got up and running in 2006-2007.

I have served on the ISBONA board for several years now, most recently as Vice President and member of the Executive Committee for the Breed Association Project. Additionally, I handle all of the advertising for USA and Canada. I am seeking another term on the board so that I may help guide ISBONA into its exciting new chapter. By continuing on the board, I will be able to assist our new board members as they are brought fully up to speed, and ensure that all transitions with the registry business are well executed. I am very committed to the protection of our Icelandic Sheep here in North America.

MARGARET Flowers, Ph.D.



Hello Icelandic shepherds of North America! My name is Margaret Flowers, and I am running for a second term on the ISBONA Board of Directors. Here's a bit about my background. I hold a B.A. in Biology (Mount Holyoke College) and Ph.D. in Botany (University of Texas at Austin), and have enjoyed a career of teaching biology at the college level (Wells College). My principal interests are now in the areas of poisonous plants and their identification, and the genetics of coat color and pattern in sheep.

I've been a fiber artist most of my life, starting pre-kindergarten with my mother teaching me how to knit. Over time, I learned to weave, and then to spin, and finally I delved into the wonder of natural dyes. So it seemed only natural to have my own fiber animals! Twelve years ago, the first Icelandics came from Dancing Lamb to what was to become Trinity Farm in central New York. I am now caretaker and "food-bringer" to my Icelandic and Shetland flocks, a flock of Icelandic chickens, native and exotic ducks, and two lazy Labrador retrievers.

Why Icelandic? As is probably true for most shepherds, the reasons were many and complex. I envisioned a flock as a retirement project and I wanted a breed that would be manageable for my future – and the modest stature of the Icelandics put that breed high up on the list. And there was the wonderful double-coated fleece that came in so many shades of natural colors. While my initial goal was to have a small spinner's flock, I soon became addicted to these wonderful creatures and...well...my flock isn't so small anymore!

At Trinity Farm, I maintain separate Icelandic flocks of horned, polled, and leadersheep. One of the wonderful things about Icelandic sheep is that they constitute a landrace – not a specialized breed but one that rightly is celebrated for multiple "purposes." I'm committed to that diversity in the North American flock, and have done so in my own flock for the last 10 years by adding the VAI genetics of the top rams from Iceland to my foundation stock of sheep bred primarily for milk and fleece. Another strong focus in my flock is up-breeding of the rare Icelandic leadersheep – also made possible with VAI. I now have a small flock that is between 85 and 95% leader genetics, and I am working towards having leadersheep recognized by the Livestock Conservancy ("endangered" status). Besides breeding stock, I sell fleece, hand-carded roving, and hand-spun yarns as well as sheep milk soaps and lotions at a variety of local shops and at fiber events.

ISBONA is a remarkable organization. These have been exciting times for ISBONA as it has recently instituted a new set of bylaws that will allow the work of the organization to proceed in a world of technology that was not envisioned at its inception. These new bylaws also allow ISBONA to realize its mission as a true breed organization, and one result of that is the formation of a North American registry for sheep born in the United States. I have been privileged to work on these important projects, as well as to serve as the Newsletter editor, a position that I also held from 2010-2014.

There is a place in ISBONA for the expert and the novice, for the conventional and the organic shepherd. It is a community that learns from one another, and where advice and help are readily available when the unpredictable happens. I believe that ISBONA is an important asset for Icelandic shepherds, and I would be honored to be elected to a second term on the Board.

MELISSA Erlund



Hi! My name is Melissa Erlund and I will be running for a second term as an ISBONA Board Member.

I started with Icelandic sheep in 2007 with the purchase of two rams and a ewe from a breeder in Kansas. Next we bought 4 ewes from Marilyn Miles in Arkansas. That was followed by three ewes and a new ram from Nancy Chase in Virginia and a ewe from Cathy Stice in WI. Two years ago, we traded ram lambs with a breeder in South Carolina and have been very pleased with our new herd sire. He has been passing on lots of spots and good conformation to his lambs.

At Dark Horse Farms, in Haughton, LA, we breed for excellent conformation, good wool, parasite and heat resistance and also good temperaments. Lambs and sheep that don't meet those criteria are culled.

Although we made a lot of mistakes at first, the ISBONA yahoo group and the wonderful newsletter helped a lot. The members were always very helpful and supportive whenever I had a question as a newbie. Now I try to help other new shepherds as much as possible. When a lamb is sold, the new owners know I will be there to help them in any way I can.

I am 50 years old, have been married for 17+ years and have a 15 year old son and a 12 year old daughter. At Dark Horse Farms, I board horses and provide Western and English riding lessons to adults, teens, and children. In addition to Icelandic sheep, we also raise Narragansett and Royal Palm turkeys and Muscovy ducks. We also have laying chickens. About a year ago, I started a part time job doing office work for a trucking company. Teenagers are expensive and the extra income has been a blessing especially when the weather causes riding lessons to slow down.

My husband is the traffic engineer for Shreveport and is also a chaplain in the Army National Guard.

ROSEMARY

Brown



Living remotely and off-grid in the backwoods of the Colorado mountains, my husband, Kenn, and I tend a flock of thirty (give or take) Icelandic sheep on our three-generational homestead. The sheep beautifully complement our wild land.

I studied fine art at Colorado State University and then worked professionally as a fiber artist, exhibiting weavings in western galleries. I began the Icelandic shepherding journey seven years ago after first researching and working with purchased fleeces from a variety of shepherds of many breeds and comparing their qualities for rug weaving. My woven work now revolves almost exclusively around the use of Icelandic wool.

With a background also in dog breeding and conformation showing, I emphasize the goal of consistently more perfect functional conformation in my flock. I feel that the abilities, attributes and hardiness of the whole animal should be considered with our versatile sheep, not just one aspect over another. In my breeding goals, I begin with a strong and muscular frame and then add to that a desirable fleece. I also have trained a group of my ewes to milk for me each summer. I freeze the milk and turn it into farm cheeses (and the world's best yoghurt) over our long winters. What a lovely commodity our breed offers with this rich milk! For homesteaders far from a grocery store, having an on-site milk source is quite a thrill!

As a member of ISBONA since 2012 (and membership secretary from 2015 to present), I have thoroughly enjoyed getting acquainted many of the membership. I feel the organization has a number of robust options ahead of us to explore in order to create a clear pathway forward. My focus on the board would be in helping ISBONA establish a full registry under our own umbrella. And I hope this tireless group of volunteers can become an ever-stronger voice, honing our ability to more expansively support one another as stewards for this treasured breed.

SUSAN Engwall, DVM



I welcome the opportunity to serve ISBONA as a member of the Board of Directors.

I have a lifetime of knowledge and skills that will be useful to the BOD. My primary interest is ethics, ethical conduct and business practices but I also have expertise in communication, education, animal health and welfare, import/export, DNA testing, breed promotion and animal registration. I understand the responsibilities and time commitment involved with being on the BOD. I would like to help ISBONA grow and thrive.

I am a veterinarian with 28 years of clinical experience and am an Associate Professor Emeritus of veterinary technology. My 15+ years of teaching experience at colleges and universities has given me proficiency with both oral and written communication, committee work and the experience of working with multiple constituencies. I have developed college courses and written college policies that provided guidelines and standards for the use of animals in teaching and learning, and an Animal Emergency Action plan. I was the person responsible for biannual inspections and coordination of repairs needed to keep institutional animal housing in compliance with the federal Animal Welfare Act. Throughout my career, I earned the reputation of being a trustworthy, responsible person who is a capable problem-solver and effective team member.

Currently I am a practicing veterinarian in Mendocino, CA. I have owned and bred Icelandic sheep since 2015. I live on an organic ranch with my husband Grant, two teenage sons, and a bevy of ranch animals, including cattle, chickens, ducks, a pack of high-spirited dogs, and some hilarious goats in addition to my flock of beloved Icelandic sheep. I am a member of the local Point Arena Theater, Mendocino Arts Center and the Manchester Guild. I look forward to having the opportunity to lend my knowledge, skills and experience to ISBONA, to help the organization thrive and grow.

Thank you.

TRACY Robertson



We live on the west coast in Corvallis Oregon, in what is called the Willamette valley. We have 26 acres which about 20 are in various pastures. Our farm started in 2011 with about 15 sheep, a flock of both horned and polled stock, all purebred Icelandics. We fell in love. Over the next few years our flock grew to about 60 sheep and we decided to focus on just polled stock. Currently we are running about 30 head.

Our primary focus is a good meat conformation and great milkiness. We have found a pretty strong market for folks wanting to cross breed Icelandics with their dairy flocks and small homesteaders that want sheep to milk. The milkier ewes of course raise the fastest growing lambs. We also try to maintain stock with good temperaments, most our flock is quiet and easy to handle. We have had pretty good success with some pretty parasite resilient stock. There is a good portion of our flock that haven't been dewormed in several years. Each year presents its own challenges as we all know. So what is working well this season may need tweaked next season. I believe pasture rotation, of which we need to do better, good minerals and quality hay keep most everyone thriving. We have found these sheep to be the perfect fit for sustaining our small farm.

For our day jobs my husband and I are both network engineers and currently work from home. I do search and rescue and just got certified in therapy work with one of my shepherd crosses. My female shepherd mix would prefer if no one was ever found, she's a bit of a recluse. We are trying to teach her to help with moving the sheep, although we all know our sheep aren't the easiest to herd. My husband also flies as his favorite past time.

TERRI Carlson



Greetings from Red Brick Road Farm!

My name is Terri Carlson. I have enjoyed being on the ISBONA Board of Directors for almost six years. I am the layout editor for our newsletter and have also designed ads for ISBONA. I have been raising Icelandic sheep since 2002, and have been a member of ISBONA since 2003.

My family relocated to northern Illinois in 1994 to raise our children in a rural environment after living in the city for a number of years. We found a beautiful old homestead that was a true diamond in the rough. In time, my husband Randy grew tired of mowing, and suggested getting sheep to help keep the pastures down. Little did we know what we were getting into!

I began researching various breeds. As an artist, I was drawn to the beauty of the Icelandic sheep. That's what we settled on, buying two bred ewes as my 40th birthday present. Since then, our flock has varied in numbers from the original two, up to nearly 100.

Our farm has been active in promoting Icelandic sheep by showing at fiber and farm shows, giving presentations to knitting and spinning groups, youth programs and also, the often-overlooked task of mentoring new shepherds. As a board member, I want to continue promoting our sheep in an honest way. I realize they are not for everyone; however, a membership to ISBONA can certainly help anyone willing to learn. Membership in ISBONA has certainly been vital to our success.

I want ISBONA to continue to be a place where both new and old members can learn and share to further promote and encourage others to delve into the wonderful world of Icelandic sheep!