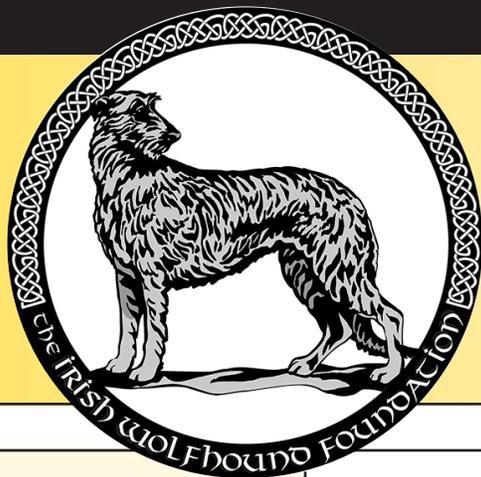


# THE Irish Wolfhound Foundation



# Focus

Summer 2010

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The Irish Wolfhound Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the full amount allowed by law.

### *Focus*

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## IWF Launches Redesigned Website

The Irish Wolfhound Foundation launched a new version of our website in May. We hope the changes we've made will make the site more useful than ever to Irish Wolfhound devotees.

Here are some of the new features you may notice:

- articles, forms, links and other information from the IW Studies website has been integrated into the IWF site
- content is connected via topic, and links to other relevant information on the site is automatically presented to you when you are looking at articles, studies, news or forum posts on specific topics.
- searching will return all related articles, studies, news, newsletters, and forum posts with the keywords you search for. You

don't need to know where the information might be on the site; you just have to tell us what you're looking for.

- Focus newsletter articles about health issues are now broken out individually so you can view them as a single article or in a PDF of the original newsletter.
- as before, forum posts can be read by anyone viewing the site so health information is widely available, but if you want to add a new post you need to log in to the site.
- we've added an extensive list of external links to web pages with information on topics we think might be of interest to IW people. We welcome suggestions for even more links!

There are also some behind-the-scenes changes which will

help us maintain the website content and our member list more easily. We strongly encourage all IWF members to log in to the site periodically and keep your contact information updated. We especially want email addresses so we can contact you that way; every snail mail we avoid means more money we can spend on the hounds, after all.

If you have comments, suggestions or questions about the new site please email us at [irishwolfhoundfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:irishwolfhoundfoundation@yahoo.com) Suggestions for additional articles (especially if you are the author of one) very warmly welcomed. We'd love to hear from you!

## Important Reminder

A reminder that the Irish Wolfhound Foundation's membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. We have accomplished much this last year but there is much we still need to do. Please help make this our best membership year ever by joining or renewing today. Many people making this small gesture of support can accomplish a lot for our hounds! You can join online at our [iwfoundation.org](http://iwfoundation.org) website or use the form included in this issue of the newsletter.

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# *Use of single-agent carboplatin as adjuvant or neoadjuvant therapy in conjunction with amputation for appendicular osteosarcoma in dogs.*

Phillips B, Powers BE, Dernell WS, Straw RC, Khanna C, Hogge GS, Vail DM.  
Veterinary Specialty Hospital of San Diego,  
1733 Nautilus Street,  
La Jolla, California 92037, USA.

Survival following amputation and administration of single-agent carboplatin for treatment of appendicular osteosarcoma (OSA) in dogs was retrospectively examined. Records of 155 dogs with appendicular OSA treated with amputation and single-agent carboplatin were included from 14 centers. Any carboplatin dosage, number of doses, and protocol schedule were eligible for inclusion. The median disease-free interval (DFI) was 256 days. The median overall survival time was 307 days. Similar prognostic survival factors were identified

in this study as reported in prior studies of canine appendicular OSA. Median DFI and survival were comparable to those reported in the original Bergman et al publication. Carboplatin treatment improves the survival probability in dogs with appendicular OSA compared to amputation alone and remains an acceptable alternative to adjuvant treatment with cisplatin.



## **Epilepsy in the Irish Wolfhound – An Update**

Dr. Margret Casal

Through the generous funds made available by the Irish Wolfhound breeders we have been able to perform a genome wide association study and locate 8 areas of great interest on chromosome 22 of the dog. Through collaborative efforts with the Veterinary College, Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, we have been able to narrow down the area to just a few genes. We have been sequencing two of these genes to

locate possible mutations. We hope to have this objective finished by the end of the summer despite the fact that we have run into some difficulties with sequencing. We still welcome any samples from affected, non-affected, and known

producer dogs. We are very appreciative for all the support and funds from the Irish Wolfhound owners and breeders!

# **Enhancement of the antiangiogenic activity of interleukin-12 by peptide targeted delivery of the cytokine to alphavbeta3 integrin.**

Dickerson EB, Akhtar N, Steinberg H, Wang ZY, Lindstrom MJ, Padilla ML, Auerbach R, Helfand SC.

Department of Medical Sciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, USA.

We engineered a fusion protein, mrIL-12vp [mouse recombinant interleukin (IL)-12 linked to vascular peptide], linking the vascular homing peptide CDCRGD-CFC (RGD-4C), a ligand for alphavbeta3 integrin, to mrIL-12 to target IL-12 directly to tumor neovasculature. The fusion protein stimulated IFN-gamma production in vitro and in vivo, indicating its biological activity was consistent with mrIL-12. Immunofluorescence techniques showed

mrIL-12vp specifically bound to alphavbeta3 integrin-positive cells but not to alphavbeta3 integrin-negative cells. In corneal angiogenesis assays using BALB/c mice treated with either 0.5 microg/mouse/d of mrIL-12vp or mrIL-12 delivered by subcutaneous continuous infusion, mrIL-12vp inhibited corneal neovascularization by 67% compared with only a slight reduction (13%) in angiogenesis in the mrIL-12-treated animals (P = 0.008). IL-12 receptor knockout mice given mrIL-12vp showed a marked decrease in the area of corneal neovascularization compared with mice treated with mrIL-12. These results indicate that mrIL-12vp inhibits angiogenesis through IL-12-dependent and IL-12-independent mechanisms, and

its augmented antiangiogenic activity may be due to suppression of endothelial cell signaling pathways by the RGD-4C portion of the fusion protein. Mice injected with NXS2 neuroblastoma cells and treated with mrIL-12vp showed significant suppression of tumor growth compared with mice treated with mrIL-12 (P = 0.03). Mice did not show signs of IL-12 toxicity when treated with mrIL-12vp, although hepatic necrosis was present in mrIL-12-treated mice. Localization of IL-12 to neovasculature significantly enhances the antiangiogenic effect, augments antitumor activity, and decreases toxicity of IL-12, offering a promising strategy for expanding development of IL-12 for treatment of cancer patients.

# A Word From the President

This spring I had the opportunity to attend the Irish Wolfhound Club of America's National Specialty in Pleasanton California. The Irish Wolfhound Foundation (IWF) played an important role in this wonderful event by providing the opportunity for affordable heart testing. Dr. William Tyrrell graciously found time in his busy schedule to fly out and perform echocardiograms and EKG's for over fifty Wolfhounds. The Foundation was pleased to sponsor and subsidize this very important service. I would like to thank Dr. Tyrrell, Frances Abrams and all the volunteers that helped out with this. As one of the educational seminars scheduled, Dr. Tyrrell gave a well received power point presentation on heart issues in our breed which covered the different maladies and medication options. Thank you to the IWCA for including the Foundation in their fundraising auction, the IWF received proceeds from earmarked auction items.

The IWF was asked to help out financial-

ly with a Rescue situation this past winter, to respect confidentiality I will limit the details. The rescue group had contacted the Foundation for a monetary grant to help cover non-basic veterinarian costs that were incurred before this hound could be re-homed. Another example of how your donations to the Irish Wolfhound Foundation benefit our noble breed.

I have received a lot of great feedback on the merger of the IWF and Anne Janis' IW Studies. The consolidation made sense in terms of fundraising and distributing grants. To clarify, Anne Janis is continuing to run her Risk Analysis data base privately and is not under the umbrella of the Foundation. If you are interested in running a Risk Analysis for breeding, please contact Anne directly.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a great summer, happy and healthy for hounds and humans alike. Please remember that the Foundation's work relies heavily on your donations, we can't provide help



Doug Marx

needed in Heath, Education and Rescue assistance without them. Thank You!

*Doug Marx – IWF President*

## As the Summer *Heats Up*

As the summer temperatures and humidity rise, dogs become less efficient at cooling themselves. Dogs are cooled by evaporation. The higher the humidity the less evaporation takes place. Heat exhaustion is a life threatening condition. Canines sweat through sweat glands in the pads of their feet and on the nose. Panting helps dogs to cool themselves, but dogs involved in significant activity and dark colored dogs are at higher risk.

One of the first signs of heat exhaustion to look for is excessive heavy panting as well as huffing and puffing. In more advanced cases your dog's gums may appear a muddy pink color. Your dog may appear

to be disoriented, weaving when it walks. It may lie down or even collapse unable to get up.

If your dog shows any signs of heat exhaustion the first thing to do is to get him out of the heat, preferably into air conditioning. Give your dog water, but not iced. If possible spray your dog down with cool water and put him in front of a fan. Place ice bags against his head and neck. A body temperature of 108 to 110 degrees can lead to organ damage. It is very important to cool your dog down before transporting him to the veterinarian. Transporting before this could result in more serious conditions or even death.

Because of the way dogs cool themselves they are more susceptible to heat exhaustion than we are. Using common sense can help prevent heat exhaustion. Provide plenty of fresh drinking water, limit running, long periods of time in the sun, and leaving dogs in vehicles. Exercise your dogs in the early morning or after sunset. If you are feeling hot, you know your dog is.

### **Heart Testing available at the Irish Wolfhound Association of the Delaware Valley Specialty Show**

The IWF will again be sponsoring Echocardiograms' and EKG's this year. Testing will be done at the host hotel on Sunday, October 10, 2010. The IWADV has a full weekend planned with not only health testing but a full day of events the day before the specialty that include a LGRA Trial, Puppy/Handler practice Match, Club-Hosted Barbecue lunch, and an educational seminar. Please visit the club's web site at [www.iwadv.org](http://www.iwadv.org) for details.

### **The Irish Wolfhound Foundation, Inc.**

#### **Treasurer's Report**

**January 1, 2010 - June 30, 2010**

**Total funds — \$168,502.78**

**Disbursements — \$21,627.48**

**Total receipts — \$33,819.92**

# Cardiac Health in Irish Wolfhounds

William D. Tyrrell, Jr., DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology), presented a seminar sponsored by the Irish Wolfhound Foundation as part of the Irish Wolfhound Club of America's national specialty show's educational events. This article will cover some of the highlights of that presentation for those who were unable to attend.

## Overview

Atrial fibrillation (known colloquially as A-fib) can occur spontaneously in large and giant breed dogs, but not in small ones, for the simple reason that there has to be a certain amount of surface area for the heart's electrical signals to be misdirected within the atria. It is not, by itself, a fatal condition in dogs. A-fib can be detected during an electrocardiogram (EKG) screening, which is non-invasive and painless to the dog. A large screening in 1992 showed that about 30% of Irish Wolfhounds have abnormal EKGs, and that figure still stands for today's IWs.

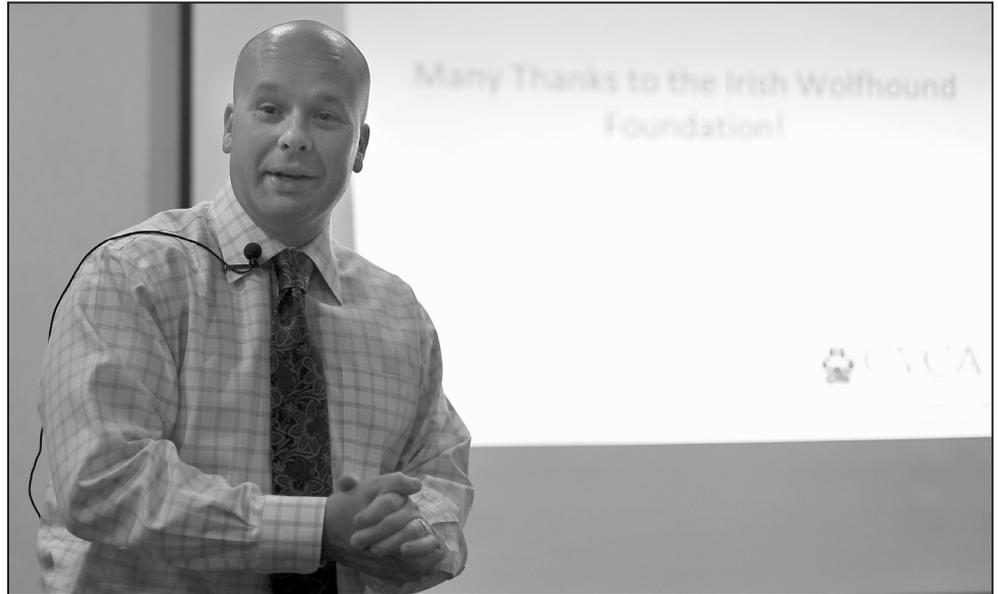
Wolfhounds with A-fib often have no or very subtle symptoms, such as a slowdown in normal activity, anxiety/clinginess, or the general assessment owners refer to as ADR (Ain't Doin' Right). As in so many other diseases, your IW will tell you when something is wrong if you know your dog and pay close attention.

## The IWF Lifetime Cardiac Study

The IWF is currently trying to conduct the final follow up for IWs entered in the IWF Lifetime Cardiac Study (note: please contact Frances Abrams of the Foundation via email at Frances.abrams@att.net, or



Dr Tyrrell examining an echocardiogram.



Photos by Mary O'Malley

Dr Tyrrell presenting an IWF sponsored seminar at this year's nationals.

Dr. Tyrrell at Chesapeake Cardiologists via <http://www.cvcavets.com/> if you have data to submit for a hound in the study). Thus far the LCS has revealed no change in the average lifespan of Irish Wolfhounds. A-fib has been consistently found in 12-13% of the IWs in the study over the years. Dr. Gina Pasieka, an associate of Dr. Tyrrell's, is currently conducting a study, sponsored by the IWF, using a subset of the LCS participants that were diagnosed with ventricular premature contractions (VPCs) to try and determine if this rhythm disturbance is actually an indicator of underlying heart disease

such as dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) or may be representative of an underlying life threatening arrhythmia. Ventricular premature beats are often quite concerning in Doberman Pinschers, but may not be in Irish Wolfhounds. There is very little overlap between IWs with VPCs and those with A-fib. While VPCs are not always fatal, they may not be as benign as once thought. A history of VPCs or sudden unexplained deaths in a family of IWs should be taken as

a cautionary sign when making breeding

decisions.

We have found that AV block (a delay in conducting the heart's electrical signals from top to bottom) is not significant in Irish Wolfhounds. Atrial premature contractions (APCs), however, usually progress to A-fib. The LCS questionnaires are also providing us with non-heart related data. Osteosarcoma, for instance, has been found to account for 75% of all the cancer deaths in LCS dogs.

The LCS study differs from the heart study published in Europe by Dr. Andrea Vollmar in 2000 in several significant ways. The Vollmar population consisted of dogs who had been brought in to veterinary hospitals due to illness, while the LCS population consists largely of IWs brought to specialty shows. The Vollmar data showed that 10% of IWs with DCM showed no clinical symptoms of DCM, but 73% of those with DCM did have A-fib. Our data does not show nearly that rate of illness, but it could be because American IWs have less heart disease, or that we generally see younger dogs at shows. Testing more veteran IWs might help clarify the trends we have seen.

## A-Fib and DCM

A-fib is actually quite common in humans and does not correlate to heart disease per se. How closely does A-fib correlate with DCM in dogs? A-fib in conjunction with a rapid heart rate is likely to be associated with DCM, but A-fib with a normal heart rate may never develop into DCM. Nonetheless, A-fib should always be treated to keep the dog's heart rate in a normal range.

## Treatment Options

In humans, A-fib is sometimes treated with electric shocks, but that treatment does not routinely work in dogs. However, since dogs don't tend to form blood clots the way people do in response to underlying atrial fibrillation, we do not get too concerned about the arrhythmia itself other than simply controlling the fast heart rates that can be associated with A-fib. The aim of most of these drugs is to slow down the electrical impulses from the atria (top chambers) to the ventricles (bottom chambers) area of the heart.

A Cornell University study has shown that sustained release calcium channel blockers given 2 times daily may be as effective as beta blockers in controlling heart rate. Thankfully, most drugs used to control heart rate are generic and therefore quite affordable, even for IWs. The degree of abnormality of the heart rate determines the intensity of the required treatment.

## Monitoring

In addition to annual heart tests, owner monitoring of heart rate at home can reduce the need for costly hospitalizations for heart problems, as an adjustment in medication can often correct an abnormal rhythm before it progresses too severely. Just behind the left elbow of the dog is the best place to find a pulse and measure heart rate (count pulse beats using a stopwatch for a full minute, or count for 6 seconds and then multiply by 10 to get an approximate rate). Knowing what is normal for your dog will help you spot problems quickly.

## Congestive Heart Failure

Once a dog has actually progressed to congestive heart failure (CHF), then different medications are needed. Pimobendan is an expensive drug but it can improve survivability in dogs with DCM. Compounding pharmacies are usually the most cost effective source for this drug. It should be considered a rescue drug used only in the most severe cases, because there is some controversy about whether it decreases



Frances Abrams helping with heart testing.

lifespan (this has been seen in humans). Patients in Dr. Tyrell's practice have gotten years of quality life because of treatment with Pimobendan.

Certain supplements may also prolong survivability in dogs with heart disease. These include taurine, l-carnitine and fish oils. Therapeutic dosing of fish oil may be as high as 8 capsules per day (40 mg/kg of EPA and 25 mg/kg of DHA) L-carnitine is dosed at 50mg/kg of body weight, 2 times daily. Taurine should be given at the rate of 500mg, 2 times daily. Caution should be used in patients taking fish oil who require surgery, as it may negatively affect clotting. It would be safest to discontinue supplementation with fish oil prior to any scheduled surgery.

## Heart Disease, Testing and Breeding

Heart disease in IWs is not sex-linked. It appears to be autosomal-dominant with varying penetration. Late onset A-fib in an IW with long-lived ancestors should not mandate removing the dog or its offspring from the breeding pool. Breeding dogs should have an annual echocardiogram, since we don't know yet if an EKG is sufficient as

a screening tool for heart disease in IWs. Breeders should not only test breeding stock annually and remove affected dogs from the breeding program, but track the heart health of all littermates throughout their lives to get a complete picture of heart health in the line. DNA screening would permit genetic screening of breeding stock for heart disease markers, but such a tool does not yet exist in Irish Wolfhounds.

The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) certifies heart test results for congenital heart disease (physical malformations of the heart present from birth), but does not address adult onset congenital diseases (such as DCM). The ARCH registry (ACVIM Registry of Cardiac Health, <http://www.archcertify.org/>) is a newer registry for heart test data which does require yearly screenings. Tests are performed only by Board-certified cardiologists and look for both congenital and acquired heart disease. The owner may choose whether or not specific information on an animal will be publicly viewable. Non-individually identifiable data in the database will be used by cardiac researchers to investigate cardiac health both in specific breeds and overall for cats and dogs (even mixed breeds can be added to the database). The IWCA may want to look into requiring ARCH certification instead of OFA certification for heart testing for CHIC.

Someone asked about the NT-ProBNP test for heart hormones. Dr. Tyrell's opinion is that it is not yet reliable. A really low value means that the dog's heart is likely healthy, but any other result requires further testing to confirm whether or not there is a problem and the severity of that problem.



An EKG screening is non-invasive and painless to a dog.

# Doggie Recipes

*This is a good treat to help chase off  
the Dog Days of summer*

## Homemade Frosty Paws

32 oz vanilla yogurt  
1 mashed banana or 1 large jar of baby fruit  
2 Tablespoons peanut butter  
2 Tablespoons of honey

Blend together and freeze in 3 oz paper cups or ice cube trays.  
Microwave a few seconds to thaw slightly before serving.

If you would like to share one of your favorite Doggie Recipes  
please email it to the editor at [thecoopersinn@aol.com](mailto:thecoopersinn@aol.com) with the  
subject "Doggie Recipe".



The rain did not stop Bob Brehl and hounds from marching with the PVIWC in Washington DC's annual St Patrick's Day Parade. As usual the crowd loved the dogs.

# Cead Mile Failte\*

Elizabeth Dammarell  
\*(One Hundred Thousand Welcomes)

It's the language of love when you open the door,  
It's Macushla, Mavoureen, Allanah Asthore,

It isn't a plaint and it isn't a moan;  
But sure, it's a typical Wolfhound tone.

It's a gay warm greeting that gives account  
Of the watch just served to the full amount.  
It's the good round tongue that tells about  
What's happening at home since you've been out.

It's a rumbling mumble that comes out blurred  
Like ancient Gaelic by moderns heard.  
It's pet words spoken in secret tone  
By a loving guard to you alone.

It's a soft sure sound so quiet and small  
To come from the throat of a hound so tall.  
It bids you welcome, it says hello;  
But somehow the joy is touched with a woe.

Most poignant sound in the world to hear,  
Filled to its echo with joy and tear;  
Heart speaks to heart on Friendship's ground  
In the wordless speech of the Irish Hound.



Photo by Mary O'Malley

*In Memory of those we  
have lost recently*

**Mary Jane Ellis- "Killybraken"  
David Malley- "Ainsea"**

*The Irish Wolfhound Foundation gratefully acknowledges contributions from the following supporters*

- |   |  |  |   |
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| Frances Abrams<br><i>IMO Thor</i>   | Joseph Dougherty<br><i>IHO Joanne Buehner</i>          | Pat Lysinger   | David Russell<br><i>IMO Curtis, Lori, &amp; Dan Johnson's "Vidar"</i> |
| Julie Acuna<br><i>IMO Thomas &amp; Colleen Flynn's "Molly"</i>                | Katherine Edwards                                      | Estate of Karen Malone<br><i>Karen Malone's bequest</i>              | Mary Ryan   |
| Alexander Adam<br><i>IMO All Wolfhounds</i>                                   | Luisa Finberg  | Susan McGreevy<br><i>IMO Jim Smalley</i>                             | Eugene Seaman   |
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**THE Irish Wolfhound Foundation**  
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*The Irish Wolfhound Foundation, Inc.*

*Focus*

*537 Hackman Rd.*

*Lititz, PA 17543*

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*Photos by Mary O'Malley*

**The Irish Wolfhound Foundation**



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**With your donations the IWF is taking steps to insure your hounds will have a healthier future.**

Please use my contribution for the following:

Research     Education     Rescue     Wherever it's needed most

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**David Milne, Treasurer — 150 Creek Rd — Phillipsburg, NJ 08865**