

## **Charlie Mielcarek - President**

My ideal vision for the club is for continued renewal and discovery. I see the club as foremost dedicated to the perpetuation of purebred Vizslas and second to the mutually beneficial interaction between them, their owners, and our membership. We will do this by continuing to improve offerings of the traditional aspects of show, hunt, and field and create organized activity or partner with existing sources to offer the family/pet aspect for owners and Vizslas that have passion for other activities or cannot perform due to age or other issues. The club will be a community that offers guidance and outlet to activities for any type of Vizslas and their owners.

The VCCNE is an AKC club. We endeavor to protect and ensure the continuation of the purebred sport dogs. My plan is to continue growing the events that the current Board has established and successfully run over the past 2 years. Additionally, we are looking to form committees that will offer events that are focused on family/pet aspects, like agility. We have, and will continue to, partner with other breed clubs to increase the quality and offerings of events. In the past year we have rejuvenated the club's offering of Hunt Test and have created new connections with other breed clubs to enhance the level and size of the next event. Hunt is instinctually part of the Vizsla and it would be a disservice to the breed to ignore what they are born to do. We will perpetuate our success at sponsoring dog breed shows. Our last sponsored show, the Vizsla entries the highest amount of entries of any breed. I will continue to work on developing ways to enable membership to discover and learn more about these aspects, which will broaden our member base and enable us to expand on these programs.

I have been involved in the club for many years. We have successfully managed to offer a lot with a relatively small membership and treasury that is mainly derived from the member dues alone. I believe that my ability for organization and detail have been a contributing factor. My involvement in budgeting and program development at my full time job have been and will continue to be a transferable skill that will help propel the club in a positive direction.

Our club encompasses a large geographic area. We need to tap the talent of existing members that can aid in enhancing our current programs and develop new ones. Creating program offerings that can speak to owners that are not hunt or show oriented has to be a focus going forward. Members that possess skills in e-learning and outreach through electronic media is key. In order to increase member involvement, communication and education has to increase. The fact that the majority of people communicate and learn electronically, makes this a major focus on enhancing current member communication, drawing existing members to participate, and attracting new members.

**BIO:**

In my day job I am an office manager for the HQ of a national firm. My education is Business Management and HR. I direct several programs that impact our offices across the country. My organizational skills and program management experience has and will continue to benefit the club going forward. The club has accomplished much in the time I've been on board: updated the logo to a modern recognizable vibrant brand, expand the FUN day to include seminars and instruction, increased involvement in show, and support hunt. Most recently I was part of the push to re-establish ourselves as the organizer of hunt events, and encouraged the club to think outside the box and participate in a very successful Dog Jog 5K. This illustrates that I have an eye back to tradition and AKC mandated programs and an eye forward to a future that will hopefully offer active programs that are new and fresh that may involve running, hiking, agility or a host of possibilities.

## **Tristan Boscardin - Vice President**

### **Free format for personal Bio.**

Greetings, my name is Tristan Boscardin and I currently have 5 Vizslas! Thank you for your consideration for the position of Vice President. My Vizsla story starts back in the early 2000s, after reading about them in a book about training pointing dogs- I wanted a bird hunting dog, but knew it was not the right time; nonetheless the seed was sown. It took the better part of a decade, but I still first thought of a Vizslas when things finally got to a point where I could take on a dog and I have been a Vizsla owner since 2010. I started looking for events to do outside of hunting season, got into enjoying AKC Hunt Tests, and ended up becoming an avid Field Trialer. After having success in the field I got into breeding to have more control over my field trial stock with my kennel King's Crook Vizslas, with the mentorship of Kim Barry (Forest King Vizslas) and Wendy Russell (Widdershins Vizslas). I wear a couple different hats and believe my perspective could help the club to facilitate both improvement of the breed and engagement between owners and Vizslas with each other.

Outside of Vizslas, I am a Mechanical Engineer by training with a Bachelor's degree from Union College and Master's in Mechanical Engineering from University of Massachusetts-Amherst; I work at a Geotechnical Engineering firm. I have a small farm with goats, chickens, bees, and an assortment birds for training the dogs. I enjoy making beer and cheese, when not busy with my various animals.

### **What is your ideal vision for the club? And what are the initial steps you would propose to get there?**

The Vizsla has a long history, and the VCCNE has a unique spot in that history. We are here today enjoying our Vizslas because of the actions of dedicated people to help carry the torch forward for us and I think it is also our responsibility to carry that torch for the future. My vision for the club to promote continued improvement within the breed to preserve their future and foster interactions between both owners and their dogs and owners with each other.

Improvement to the breed typically happens on the breeder's side, and I would push for our club to continue our support for both health and performance testing with our breeders. I would love for the club to put on educational events to help keep our members, breeders and owners alike, current on what we can do to best address faults within the breed. I would also push for the club to go further than simply address the breeder side, since there are breeders within our region that neither prescribe to our breeder's ethics nor are members of our club. I think it is necessary that we clearly communicate to our membership and the public that they influence the breed when they are buying a puppy, and the more we can do to provide educational material and programs, the better we serve the breed as a whole.

Fostering interactions between members, starts with opening up communication. I want to see more communications with the membership regarding what is going on within the club. It has been brought to my attention that we live in an age where different people interact through different platforms. We must work to keep everyone informed about what is going on and ensure there are open lines of communication between the board and the membership.

In order to move forward, we need a club that engages its membership. We are a volunteer organization, and it is hard to motivate people to help take on events that they have no connection. Moreover, it is hard to retain membership that feel underserved. I would like to see the club host more regular events. Not only AKC events for our members to participate in such as the Conformation and Hunt Test that we currently hold, also Agility, Obedience, and we can look into what would get our membership invested. Critical is that beyond holding events, we give our members informal opportunities to try new things and provide them with the basic tools for success.

### **How do you see your board involvement as benefiting the club?**

My involvement as a board member would help diversify the knowledge base of the board and bring an engineering mindset of problem solving to the board. I have helped out with the hunt test for a number of years now and would use that firsthand experience to help better organize the support committees need to help put on events.

### **What do you think the club could do to increase member involvement?**

The VCCNE could communicate with its members regularly, to help identify barriers to involvement, create a sense of community, and ask people to help out with small things to create a club culture of helping. I would focus on first getting new members involved also would help create the habit of participation, then reach out to some of our long standing members try and find ways they can help and get involved.

### **Cheryl Mielcarek - Treasurer**

My Ideal vision for the club is to continue to bring the VCCNE into the 21st Century and have a truly versatile club consistent with the history of the Vizsla as a bird hunting breed as well as encouraging responsible breeding and showing of the Vizsla as an AKC breed. I also envision encouraging and introducing activities that go beyond the traditional, such as agility, service /companion dogs, hiking/running as well as non-competitive activities that engage all family members with their dogs.

I would continue on with what has already been accomplished by myself as current Treasurer and the other Board Members. Using social media and email to be in better contact with the membership. Our club covers more territory than most Regional clubs (four states). It is a tremendous undertaking and makes it often difficult for members to get together physically, so we rely on input on social media, email and newsletters to reach our membership. I plan to continue to strive to update the ByLaws, to the current era so that future Boards will have regulations that make more sense in the current climate of the club. I will continue to encourage members to maintain membership and seek new members that will volunteer and support the activities of the club and come up with some innovative ideas that we have had this past year.

I have been a Board member for the last 4+ years. Two at large and two as Treasurer. I have worked on and succeeded in streamlining the bank accounts. I have taken over the Website from an outside web host so that we can keep it more up to date going forward, as well as the club related Social Media. I initiated a Member only secret FB group as a forum for only members which I hope to see evolve further over the next two years. I attend as many club events as possible through the course of the year to get a sense of what members like and don't like. I enjoyed seeing the most recent Dog Jog develop thanks to the hard work of one of our Board Members. I feel that myself and the Board, although have had to take puppy steps, are getting the momentum of the club back going into 2017-18.

I would like to see the revitalizing of Hunt/Field trials continue and bring back those folks and dogs of course that have interest and care to volunteer. Having mutual events with other club and groups such as Viz Whizz Boston or other breed clubs for events. Offering educational opportunities whether it be at events or online webinars. I have been passionate about trying to set up committees that will assist the Board in organizing and running activities and committees from other states to report to the Board on what interests them where they live for their dogs. A Rescue committee to help support the Coordinator.

#### *BIO:*

I am currently a Board Member in the position of Treasurer, and a Board Member since 2012. I have been involved with VCCNE as a member since 2002, and as a Board Member I have worked to plan Fun Days, Hunt Tests and Shows. I work with the Rescue aspect of the club and have rescued 4 Vizslas over the last 13 years. As Treasurer, I have streamlined that Bank accounts and been responsible for distributing Paypal club and rescue donations into there proper accounts. Coordinating and maintaining accounts with Quickbooks. Managing rescue donations as well as reimbursing foster volunteers for expenses with rescue dogs. Reviewing accounts payable and receivable for events, memberships donations and surrenders.

In my personal life I am a Dental Administrative Manager, work part-time at a local Dog Day Care facility and I am a proud Volunteer for the VCCNE.

### **Patsy Dahlinghaus - Corresponding Secretary**

What is your ideal vision for the club? VCCNE is a great club with a diverse repertoire of events. VCCNE sponsors two conformation specialties a year, plus hunting tests, plus fun days! I would like to see VCCNE continue as a club that continues to encourage and promote the versatility of the Vizsla! This might involve also getting involved in a casual way with an introduction to other performance areas at which Vizslas might excel (scent work, tricks training, barn hunt, rally & obedience and agility). I also would like to see more members get actively involved with running the events of this club. I believe that personal contact is necessary to get people involved - blanket e-mails asking for volunteers generally does not produce much of a response. We can also sponsor hunt-training seminars, handling seminars, maybe webinars for breeders and show handling tips. The VCA has a Versatility program and a title of VC for those dogs that have met the requirements, this is not an AKC title, clubs don't seem to promote this test as much as they should. Find out what our members want and gear activities accordingly.

And what are the initial steps you would propose to get there? Communication. At least one communication to members from the President or Board Member or a newsletter every month (or if that is too much, every two months). This can be sent via e-mail. Rather than burdening one person to send out this communication, perhaps each Board Member could take a month/bi-month to be responsible for compiling the info and sending out the communication after soliciting input on upcoming events (set up the schedule at the start of the fiscal year)? Sponsor an event (or include at the fun day an event), which teaches basic introduction and exposure to some of the other venues mentioned above about which many of us have no clue. For example, if I knew exactly what went on at a barn hunt, or scent (nose) work maybe I would try it.

How do you see your board involvement as benefiting the club? I love Vizslas and have devoted a significant portion of my life to breeding and preserving them. I also am actively involved in a variety of AKC performance events (conformation, hunting tests, agility training) and am always happy to help new people! I am organized and hardworking, and I am a good team player. I am a member of the VCA.

What do you think the club could do to increase member involvement? Improve Communication! if you don't write to members frequently and keep them engaged, they forget about you - and then they lapse. One suggestion is to have a breeder-provided "reduced fee first year membership" that breeders could give to their puppy people in the area! We need new blood - tap into some of those wonderful homes!

Free format for personal Bio. I am proud to carry on and develop the Copper-Creek, line started by my late sister, Carol Vola. I take protection of the Vizsla breed very seriously. We are so blessed to have this breed in such good shape. I am a huge advocate for health research on major issues affecting our breed, especially hemangiosarcoma, I am a Breeder of Merit with the AKC. I applaud VCCNE for having an active and respected vizsla rescue program. I am married, the mother of two adult sons, and I work full-time.

### **Debi LaRocca - Recording Secretary**

Secretary of VCCNE since fall 2012. Currently I have one Vizsla, Luna (age 6) but we prefer being a 2 vizsla family.

I think the club should be a place for everyone. People who want Vizslas as pets, people who want to show (or learn more about showing) their dogs, people who want to hunt (or learn more about hunting) their dogs. Plus, people interested in other activities such as agility and dock diving etc. to really showcase everything the vizsla is! The club should also maintain it's role as an place for vizsla rescue.

I am a social person who knows a lot of vizsla people in the community. I'm an ambassador for the breed as is my dog Luna. I have vizslas as pets but I've engaged them in hunt training, agility training, behavioral training etc over the years. I am also willing to do home visits for vizsla rescue and have adopted a dog via vizsla rescue.

The most important thing the club can do is advocate for getting dogs from responsible breeders. Vizslas are getting more popular and as a club it is our responsibility to educate people on reputable breeders. It is also our responsibility to have referred breeders who are responsive to inquiries and not dismissive.

The club needs to demonstrate value to its members. This has always been a struggle because of the fact that our area spans 4 states and our board members are so spread out. People need to think they're getting something for the membership fee. The club also could benefit from more member communication (though this is admittedly a challenge because it's a big job for one or two people). We really could benefit from some newer/energized board members.

**\*\*\* For Board Member at Large candidates Voting will be for two out of the three nominees.**

#### **Amy Balogh-Warner - Board Member at Large**

1. I see the VCCNE moving towards a more dynamic and inclusive club. The Club's history stands on its own but the membership and growth depend on its foundation of Field/Hunt, Conformation, education, versatility and health of the breed. I'd like to engage more members in those areas they'd like to explore by reestablishing committees to facilitate those areas.

It's been a telling sign that the Board of the last 5-7 years has carried the club. I think if we're to succeed as a club we need to allow the membership to drive our progress and strengthen it for the future. What I bring to the table is a background in business operations, logistics and marketing.

2. I'd like to put my experience at work to grow this club by helping facilitate the changes needing improvement (e.g. updating by-laws, committees, member engagement) and assisting in the implementation of new activities.

3. It's clear the membership needs to be revived - there are many who would like to be involved but aren't sure how or don't understand how a club like the VCCNE would benefit them or their Vizslas. Communication is one of our biggest challenges. Our Facebook pages and community events draw a crowd so I feel like creating a marketing campaign to show the value of the VCCNE and what members gain by being involved (education, events, socials, AKC events, clinics, etc.) would give potential members something to be proud to call theirs. In addition, members like to know what's happening in the Club thus publishing monthly/quarterly newsletters keeps people excited and offers stories of their beloved companions.

Bio: I've been on the board for 2 years (at large). Prior to that a 'card carrying member' and have seen the board carry much of the weight. I hail from California but found a love for both Vizslas and New England several years back and planted roots in Vermont. I pride myself on the ability to see outside the box while achieving goals to drive success. I'm upfront, an open-book and love to learn about the areas of this breed I'm not familiar with. I don't pretend to know about the history of this club or its iterations but I absolutely respect where it's been and look forward to seeing it thrive into the future. I'm a hiker, lover of good food, explorer and an epic nap-taker... all of which I do with my boy Kona (Am GCH Szizlin' Kiss Me Kate JH x Am GCH Artisans Vladimir the Imperial).

### **Deadra Doku-Gardner - Board Member at Large**

I have been a dog parent since I was ten years old... that is 45 years! My first breed was Lhasa Apsos. I was introduced to Vizslas in 1992. My first four footed red baby, Katie, came from Sue and Larry Gray of Dirigo Farms. That was in 1996! I currently own two females, Sabrina and Kukla.

In 2012 I was contacted by a former board member and was told that the club was going to have to DISSOLVE due to lack of interest by the membership. No one from the current board wished to remain active and there were very few volunteers interested in participating. I was asked if I was interested in becoming a board member. I was sad to hear that without volunteers that this old club would just dissolve so without having any idea what was involved I said "yes" to the position of Treasurer. I served as the Treasurer from 2012 to 2014.

Little did I know what a great group of people I was going to meet on this Board. I believe that the current board has accomplished a great deal to resurrect an ALMOST dead club. We have done a great deal of research and historical digging to figure out why things are the way they are in the club from solving fiscal and banking issues to establishing the VCCNE as a nonprofit to amending AKC bylaws to researching the origins of a Special Event Trophy. The board has tried to appeal to the entire membership base – pet only families, show households and most recently field and hunt. The current board leaves politics out, the constant complainers behind and we try to move forward in a positive manner that will only benefit the club and its members.

Prior to 2012 I had done a little rescue work and assisted in placing a few of our special dogs. Since 2015 I Chair the annual Spring Fling Show (part of Trapp Falls Kennel Club).

Going forward my first priority is to see club membership grow. Unlike other breed clubs the VCCNE covers 4 New England states. I think it would be beneficial if we could have at least one lead volunteer from each state as a membership liaison.

I encourage all members to participate in club events. Volunteerism is what makes our club work.