



MSCA 2022 Nominating Committee Members

Elizabeth Brockman, Chair
Colby Brown, Director
Susan Sorg, Director

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Nancy Joyce Simmons, MSCA Corresponding Secretary

Please share a brief biography. *Please share information about yourself, your family, lifestyle, farm, ranch, livestock, training, education, profession, honors, and awards.*

I have raised and bred Maremma Sheepdogs for over 20 years. I have a large flock of commercial wool sheep that I rotationally graze in a mountainous area with a high predator load of coyotes, coywolves and mountain lions. I raise my pups to be fully bonded with livestock before they move on to their new homes. I believe bonding is the key. I also raise and train Border Collies and compete in Open sheepdog trials throughout the US and Canada. My life with working sheepdogs, both Border Collie and Maremma, has taught me to respect their profound instincts and to always work with their instincts in training.

I am a paralegal by trade and have a number of skills that can help this Board move forward to the future we are all hoping for the Club.

Why do you want to serve on the Maremma Sheepdog Club of America Board of Directors?

I was delighted to be asked to serve the Maremma Sheepdog Club of America as Corresponding Secretary pro tem. I have felt for years that it was too difficult to communicate with the prior Boards of Directors. My goal was to ensure that this Board would be available and transparent with the membership.

I started the Weekly Update email to the members (formatted by my colleague Tabitha Compton) to keep members involved on the projects we are working on for them. I check the Club inbox several times a day and answer all emails punctually. I receive many calls and texts from members and I communicate all their concerns to my colleagues on the Board. I believe that we work for our members and at all times bear in mind that our member's needs are our first priority.

I hope to assist every member I possibly can on their journey with these brilliant dogs.

Maremma Sheepdog Experience and Statement of Commitment to the Breed.

Please highlight your aspirations for the breed and your experience with the Maremma Sheepdog. How many years have you been involved with the breed?

I have had Maremmas for over 20 years. I could not possibly have my sheep operation without my Maremmas. They are a great joy to me, both in how they keep my sheep safe, keep my life of Border Collie training and trialing alive, and in the pure joy they give me with their intelligence and deep affection every day. I live in the Northeast, where Maremmas were first brought to the US long before there was a Club, and there are many unregistered Maremmas. My first dogs were all unregistered, but they were also brilliant, loyal, healthy and temperamentally sound. As time went on, I wanted to be able to breed my own replacement dogs, but I worried about inbreeding and health. I sought out well-bred registered dogs with that view in mind. I raise my pups to be fully bonded with livestock and ready to work when they leave. I have pups working on both large and small operations throughout the Northeast, Southeast and Midwest.

My aspirations for the breed are to preserve the working traits that make the Maremma so brilliant, to ensure that the best working dogs with the best temperaments are bred, and to encourage health testing and working ability in all breeding.

What business/administrative experience do you have that will be helpful for the board position you are applying for?

In addition to my years of training sheepdogs, I am a paralegal by trade. I have worked assiduously since being asked to serve pro tem to help the MSCA with legal and business issues. I also have strong database and other computer skills that I can contribute to the Board.

Statement of Purpose.

What will you contribute to the organization, members, and Maremma Sheepdogs?

I will increase transparency, accountability and availability of the Board to all members. I will ensure all emails and other communications are answered in a timely manner. I will adjudicate for our members to ensure they receive their registrations in a timely manner and to address any issues they may have with such documentation. My vision of the Corresponding Secretary is that I am the members point of contact who can be trusted to keep their concerns, goals and ambitions firmly before the Board at all times. I believe that the Board must always consider the needs of the members and their working dogs first, and this will lead the Club to the best future for the members and for our beloved breed.

What is your vision for the future of the MSCA?

I believe the MSCA could become a first rate registry in the model of the American Border Collie Association. We can build the best database of Maremma pedigrees, carefully reviewing every registration for proper breeding. We can continue to educate our members and future members on the breeding, raising and training of this consummate guardian dog. We can encourage farmers, ranchers and shepherds to consider the Maremma first when considering a livestock guardian dog. We can provide the education so that all young pups get off the the right start and succeed in their work. We can be professional, reliable, available to our members and the public in a manner that these brilliant dogs deserve.

Please list your top 3 priorities/achievements for the MSCA for your term in office.

1. Continue Weekly Update emails to reassure members we are working on their behalf.
2. Prepare comprehensive Newsletter with full update on Board activities, plus ads for pups, available dogs, livestock, equipment, anything that benefits our members.
3. Build a culture of members and breeders conscious of the need for working ability and health testing, with a website that features in-depth information on health, working ability, training, education and access to help when needed.

Please list any further information you would like the membership to know about you.

Just like all of you, I love these dogs. I believe it is our mission to protect their working ability and encourage the best breeding and training practices for the future of the breed.