

**From Ric Kildow – Seeking the Board Position of President of NAVHDA International**  
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For those of you who don't know me, I wanted to write a more personal statement about why I believe change is necessary in the NAVHDA Executive Council and why I believe I can be a change agent. If we were able to have a personal conversation, I would like to talk to each of you about NAVHDA's core values and how my goals can help us to meet these values.

**Eliminate Conflict of Interest:** I am an owner-handler, like most of you, not a breeder or professional trainer. The current EC members share too many personal and professional interests. While I don't begrudge anyone selecting the kennel or breed of their choice, perception matters and the current perception is one of group think, exclusivity, and elitism. The role of those on the EC is too critical to allow the appearance or possibility of self-interest.

**Regional Representation:** Out of the 4 elected members and 8 appointed members on the Executive Council, there are no members from the west coast and half of the appointed Directors are from a few East Coast chapters. This means a small group of people from select areas are making a disproportionate number of decisions that affect all of us in NAVHDA.

If elected, one of my primary goals will be to broaden the representation on the Executive Council to be inclusive to all of North America. Other key goals include the following:

- Pursue an organizational philosophy based on the mutual respect of our membership
- Promote increased participation from both our national and international leaders
- Seek diversity and inclusion in the formation of committees, dispersing responsibilities across the regions and among owners of different breeds

**Sponsors and Partners:** We need more sponsors in order to be self-sustaining, especially with the social, political, and environmental challenges that effect hunting and sporting groups today. During the last few years we have lost three sponsors, as well as Bob West, one of the dog world's most influential dog trainers, author, and community ambassadors. I bring strong leadership skills, from 30 years owning a private chiropractic practice and 40 years' service as a Navy reservist, ending my career as the Chief of Staff for the Commander, Information Dominance Corps, U.S. Southeastern Region. This diverse experience is why I believe I will be strong in developing relationships with new sponsors and organizations, as well as in strengthening existing relationships.

**Versatile Hunting Dogs:** We must not become a testing organization focused primarily on a few breeds, but must be open to and recruit from the breed clubs of all of the continental breeds. One of my goals will be to establish cordial relations with and representation from the breed clubs for the 38 versatile breeds now recognized in NAVHDA. I believe this will support one of the core values of NAVHDA, that of improving all our versatile breeds being hunted in North America today.

**Leadership and Communication:** Presently, many of the votes and decisions take place behind closed doors – I will change that. I will report on all board activities and how the EC board members vote on initiatives. Transparency is the foundation of accountability, responsibility and allowing the evaluation and promotes involvement.

One of my first actions as President will be to survey members and work interactively to develop a business plan for the next three years, with clearly defined objectives and milestones. We'll develop an incremental, comprehensive, and strategic business plan that is productive, inclusive and diverse. With a strategic plan developed by the EC and the membership working together, we can then explore what other types of staffing or resources might be needed to support NAVHDA in achieving future goals.

Our membership is made up of motivated, intelligent, and hardworking volunteers with the skills we need to continue growing. These members want to be part of the improvement process and I will seek them out and ask for their assistance.

For those of us looking for change, inclusiveness, and diversity, we must act now to effect change later. Let's begin by agreeing to aggressively pursue our important mutual goals.

This is my scorecard. I appreciate your support, your vote and I will expect you to **hold me accountable**.

