



CROATIAN SHEEPDOG

CONSERVATION CLUB OF THE USA



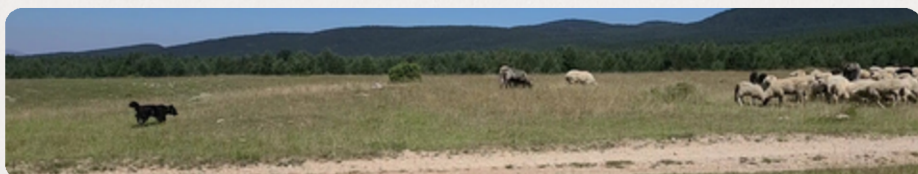
Dog Spotlight Brik Od Gazde

Brik has earned 5 Best in Open Show awards in his short show career. Beyond his accomplishments, it's the fact that he has a stellar temperament that we appreciate the most.

Bred by Blago Petric, he was imported and is owned and handled by McKenzie Harrison Kahns of Resolute Kennels in Arizona and Garoleen Wilson of Wilsong Kennel in Kansas. The BIOS photo is the perfect example of his resilience. When he arrived in the US, he was picked up at the airport in late August 2025 by McKennzie. He learned English there and adjusted to a new household. When Brik came to Kansas for the summer in April of 2026, he was transported from AZ to Tulsa, OK by two people he had never met, along with 5 hairless terriers. Handed off to me, whom he had never met, to stay at my daughter's house with dogs and cats he had never met. The next day, he was handed off to my friend Randy Dillman of Nekkid Ambition AHT to go in the show ring. This was the first time Randy had ever seen a Croatian Sheepdog. Brik went Best in Open show from a large entry that day.

The best way to showcase this amazing dog is through pictures with his Croatian family sent to me by Blago. Croatian Sheepdogs want to do stuff with their people. Jumping off a cliff into the water with his boy makes me smile. The relationship with his breeder is evident in the third photo. Dogs doing dog stuff with their people is the best!

McKenzie and I are forever grateful to Blago Petric for allowing Brik to join our families. Brik will become one of the foundation dogs in this breed in FSS & AKC. I know it was heart-wrenching to let him go.



Message from the President

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Croatian Sheepdog Conservation Club of the USA! This is one of the first steps in an exciting but long process of seeking AKC recognition for our beloved breed, the Croatian Sheepdog.

As president of our newly founded club, I was asked to introduce myself. My husband Joe and I live in rural North Central Kansas, 20 miles from the Geographic Center of the 48 Contiguous States. We have two grown daughters and 4 granddaughters. Joe is a row crop and alfalfa hay farmer, and we have a 50-head commercial beef herd. I have always been an animal lover, dogs in particular. I have a passion for rare breeds of any species. I also breed Normande cattle, Erminette chickens and naked terriers, so let's add curly black herding dogs!

The reason people choose a breed of dog to live with is as varied as the hundreds of breeds in existence around the world. My involvement with Croatian Sheepdogs was not a planned thing. To make a long story short, I was introduced to the breed by my son-in-law, Michael Taylor. I won't tell his story; that is his to tell. He imported a pair of Croatian Sheepdogs, and I was in love. My husband Joe and I have American Hairless Terriers that I compete with in conformation and dabble in performance and companion events. Each time I take a Croatian Sheepdog to a dog class or event, there are so many questions! I love "talking dogs" and welcome questions. Becoming involved with this breed has led me to meet knowledgeable, interesting people from around the world whom I can learn so much from. The more I learn, the more I realize how much I don't know. I want to thank the Croatian breeders who continue to mentor US enthusiasts and allow some of their best dogs to travel across oceans to be a solid foundation of new breeding programs.

This club is based on our love of the breed. It is these hard-working volunteers who will enable the breed to move forward in the United States. Clubs are for people; dogs don't care. Whether your Croatian Sheepdog is a working farm dog, Best in Show winner, top sport competitor, or a loved companion, they all matter. In this day and age of worldwide connectivity, we have unique opportunities and challenges that we must capitalize on. Each of us has different interests and talents. We will need to put politics and online drama aside and support one another. Celebrate each other's accomplishments and respect other opinions that may differ from ours.

Respectfully,

Garoleen Wilson, President

The Club website is: <https://www.croatiansheepdog.org/>

The official Facebook page is [American Croatian Sheepdog Conservation Club](#)

Croatian Sheepdog Pedigree Database <https://hrvatskiiovcar.pedigre.net/en/index.php>

Member Spotlight

Micheal Taylor (Happy Acre Kennel)

When I was young, I was looking through a book of dog breeds, and I came across the Hrvatski Ovčar. I was immediately drawn to the beauty of the dogs as well as the history. My grandmother was a firstborn American Croat, and I was accustomed to herding breeds. It became a dream of mine to have my own Croatian Sheepdog. A dream that took me around 20 years to live. Shortly after receiving my male, I decided to get a female as well. I had noticed good working dogs become more and more rare, and I understood it as my responsibility to extend this dream to future generations. My male worked daily with me during chores time. My female only had occasional opportunities but showed great instinct and drive. We have since sold off our milk goats but still love the CS as an all-around great family companion who is always alert and attentive to our household.



Happy Acre Kennel

Micheal Taylor



Photo of a Hrvatski Ovčar (Croatian Sheepdog) working a flock of sheep in the hills of Croatia, alongside its partner, a Tornjak (Croatian Shepherd dog). Photo taken by Katie Fallon June 2026

Preserving the Croatian Sheepdog in America

The Croatian Sheepdog Conservation Club of the USA is dedicated to preserving and promoting one of Europe's oldest herding breeds through education, responsible breeding, exhibitions, and community involvement.

This Issue in Pictures



Brik Od Gazde
First Certificate of Merit
Owner Makenzie Harrison
Kahns and Garoleen Wilson



Mara
Second Certificate of Merit
Owner Garoleen Wilson



Sara at herding lessons
Owner Carolyn Hamm



Arya From the Heart of Slavonia
Owner Katie Fallon

Croatian Sheepdog Recognized

www.croatiaweek.com/croatian-sheepdog-intangible-cultural-heritage-croatia/

Summary:

The Republic of Croatia has officially declared the Croatian Sheepdog (hrvatski ovčar) as intangible cultural heritage, marking a major milestone for this historic native breed. Deeply rooted in the rural life of the Slavonia region since at least the 14th century, these distinctive black, curly-coated dogs have served generations of farmers as loyal working companions for herding livestock and guarding property. Driven by the efforts of local breeders and kinologists, this prestigious new status aims to safeguard the breed's genetic integrity, authentic characteristics, and traditional working abilities for future generations. While highly valued for its historical farming role, the Croatian Sheepdog is increasingly recognized worldwide for its sharp intelligence and agility, transforming it from a local farm hand into a versatile international sports dog and active family companion. More information is available on the Croatian Sheepdog's history and its newly recognized cultural heritage status.



<https://www.fci.be/en/nomenclature/CROATIAN-SHEPHERD-DOG-277.html>

~FCI Hrvatski Ovcar standard

Get Involved!

Interested in doing more?
Reach out to us to see how you can get involved!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Club Meeting

July 29, 2026

9:00 PM Eastern time

Full club meeting. Stay tuned for the Zoom link



AKC Open Show

Aug 14, 2026

Garoleen Wilson and McKenzie Kahns will attend with Brik



Things you can do with your dog

Croatian Sheepdogs are quite versital - you can enjoy conformation, agility, herding, and more! If you are interested in getting started in a sport and not sure where to start, feel free to ask in a group for some advice.

DID YOU KNOW?



Historical records dating back to 1374 describe black herding dogs remarkably similar to today's Croatian Sheepdog.

