



26 February 2023

Dear Affiliate Club Member:

The PCA Foundation received the following update from Dr. Gustavo Aguirre a few weeks ago, and the Board wanted to share it with you. As you probably know, Dr. Aguirre and his team at the University of Pennsylvania have done the majority of the eye research in Poodles, and were responsible for the development of the DNA test used today to identify PRA in the breed we all love that gives us all so much. As you will see as you read on, they continue to make some amazing progress!

"I am attaching the progress report for the PCA grant that ended December 22, 2022. As you can see, we have made great strides in the research, but are still not quite there. The day Blindness/Retinal Degeneration work is completed, and a DNA test is available. A scientific manuscript is now in preparation.

*Recent studies during the past 6 months were able to trace the 'origin' of the disease to a common female born in 1888. **Every dog that we have identified, either Standard Poodles, or the so-called 'Doodles' with Standard Poodles ancestry all trace back to this one female.** For those interested in anthropology, this is comparable to the 'Eve' in Africa. While this is an interesting finding in and of itself, it really has important application to diseases such a polymicrogyria (PMG) which has a very varied clinical presentation with different gradations of severity. We are using this approach to identify potential affected dogs that may have a very mild clinical disease, but because of cost, the gold standard for the disease diagnosis-MRI-has not been done. This will increase the sample size for the study and get us to the goal line-finding the gene and mutation. We are almost there.*

Similarly, the studies on ONH (Optic Nerve Hypoplasia) have progressed nicely, but slowly because the disease is complex and more than one gene of genetic loci are involved. In all aspects of the work, we have received a major boost by the addition of Dr. Anil Sigdel to the projects. Dr. Sigdel is a veterinarian with a PhD in molecular genetics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He started at PENN in early August and has contributed greatly to the recent progress in the research. His support comes from the Van Sloun Foundation who recently established the Sylvia M. Van Sloun Laboratory for Canine Genomic Analysis at PENN. This new addition to our staff will greatly facilitate the research progress for the poodle diseases. As always, we are very grateful to the PCA and the many breeders/owners who have helped our research."

I have also attached the update report that was included with his message for you to share with your members, and as you can see, progress is and has been made in many areas still of concern to us as breeders.

Dr. Aguirre is seeking another grant (two-year term) to finish this important research. The Foundation strongly believes in supporting he and his team.

The Foundation was founded with an idea we would always have an amount “in reserve” in the work we do. In the current market climate, and as we suddenly lost our hard working President last year, we find ourselves at risk not to be able to fully fund Dr. Aguirre’s request at this time. Since the beginning of 2021, the Foundation has supported research in grants totaling \$165,000 in the areas of Eye Diseases, Epilepsy, Hemangiosarcoma RPA, Addison’s Disease, and other hereditary diseases found in our breed. We are therefore reaching out to the fancy in general asking for donations in any amount so we can again build up our Treasury. 100% of donations received are used for the research we support, as has always been the case. It is a great time for an honorarium or a memorial. Please use the Donation form found on our website, www.poodleclubofamericafoundation.org, and indicate whether or not we can send a Thank You to the family of your honoree. Our Treasurer’s address is also there for your convenience. We also do an annual page in the National catalog thanking our generous donors.

The Board recognizes there are some clubs that currently make a generous, annual contribution to the Foundation through activities on their local level, and Thank you for these! We are also fully cognizant that there are a few clubs with very limited memberships and treasuries at this time. We simply ask you consider giving what you can so we can continue funding these vital on-going research projects that are indeed discovering many new things! This quest for better health indeed “takes a village”!

Thank you for your time and consideration, and
With sincere thanks to you all!

Regards,

Jordan L. Chamberlain and the Poodle Club of America Foundation Board
Miniature Representative Board Member