President's Message

Hopefully 2005 has been a healthy and happy year for you and your family, both two legged and four legged. The past year has been another busy and exciting year for the Portuguese Water Dog Foundation.

The most recent grant that we are supporting is Dr. Modiano's Hemangiosarcoma Research Project. The purpose of this research is to develop a method of early detection for this deadly cancer. This grant is being co-sponsored with the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America. The Foundation and the Club joined together to have the first H2O K9 Health Tent at the PWDCA National Specialty held recently in beautiful Cumberland, Maryland. What a terrific turnout!! In just two days, 308 blood samples were collected for hemangiosarcoma and all the cheek swabs for Addison's research were gone. It is still not too late for you to participate in these two important research projects. You can get all the information on our website www.pwdfoundation.org.

Fund-raising is always a critical goal of any charity and together we can assure a healthier life for our wonderful dogs. We have recently been approached to help fund some other health research that impacts our breed. All donations regardless of the amount are important.

We have some really talented “angels” working to raise funds for the Foundation and we would like to recognize them for donating so generously of their time and talent.

Debbie Bender has a wonderful, varied assortment of PWD items.....more items than you can imagine. Please visit her website: http://www.cafepress.com/calimel where you can find PWD’s adorning hats, tee shirts, clocks, mugs, calendars, note cards, totes, tiles, even U.S. Postage stamps with PWD's and many more items. 100% of the net proceeds from Debbie’s sales go to the PWD Foundation. Thank you, Debbie! Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Debbie! Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Debbie! Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Debbie! Your support is greatly appreciated.

Our “Friends of the PWD Foundation”, Nigel Clark, Milarie Rude and Kathy Bumiller put together the fabulous cook book, “Don’t Turn Your Back” - Cooking with your PWD. There are over 600 recipes, plus tips on grooming and health and much more. There are only a few left and they can be purchased for $12.00. Check the PWDF website for information on how to obtain your own cookbook! Nigel, Milarie, and Kathy - a huge thank you for your efforts on behalf of Portuguese Water Dog health!

Karen Berggren and her Pedigree Study Group has put together a CD that has over 24,000 PWD pedigrees on its database. You’re sure to find a pedigree for almost every PWD! You can get this comprehensive CD for a minimum $25.00 donation to the PWDF plus $6.00 postage. It’s available from Karen’s website http://www.pwdogs.net/PSG.html or the PWD Foundation website. Karen also was a big part of the success of the H2O K9 Health tent at the Specialty. She unselfishly gave two full days of her time, spent in the Health tent with her computer, printing out pedigrees for the both the Hemangiosarcoma and Addison's Research Projects. Thank you, Karen!!

A Special Thank You to the PWDCA Board for making the Health Tent possible at the National Specialty and for their support on various research projects. They have been great supporters of our breed’s health. We hope this will continue at future specialties; it was certainly a great achievement.

Please visit our web site for updates on the latest research projects. Thank you again for your support and please contact us if you have any questions or suggestions about the Foundation.
It began with an unrelated inquiry to the PWDF website about a very sick Portuguese Water Dog - and culminated in an unprecedented number of blood samples given for cancer research. Under the PWD Foundation and PWDCA H2O K9 HEALTH Tent at the 2005 National Specialty, a record number of PWD’s - 308 - gave blood. A team of researchers and their vet tech staff from the National Institute for Health (NIH) outside Washington, DC came to Cumberland, MD each day to collect samples for the newly funded Hemangiosarcoma research being supported jointly by the PWDF and the PWDCA. An additional 50 sample kits were sent home with owners to collect blood from their dogs not attending the specialty—every single last kit the team had brought with them was given out! This overwhelming response to the request for PWD’s to participate in the study astounded the researchers, but not the PWD community: we know how our breed excels at being front and center for health issues!

Dr. Modiano and his research team are working to develop a test which will detect the presence of hemangiosarcoma in the early stages of the disease. A test which would allow early detection, prior to the typical clinically evident signs in late stages, would open the door for possible treatments in the early stages of this horrific type of cancer. As for most tumors, early detection improves treatment outcomes.

About a year ago, an email from a PWD owner to the PWD Foundation website put us on the trail that eventually led to the AMC Cancer Center/University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and Dr. Jaime Modiano, one of the most renowned veterinary cancer researchers in the world. After some very fruitful conversations with him and going over his plans for an early detection tool, the PWDF invited him to submit a grant proposal for funding by the Foundation. Following positive recommendations received during the standard peer review process, the PWDF voted to support the grant. The PWDF presented the grant proposal to the PWDC, who then voted to co-sponsor the research by providing 50% of the funds.

Thank you again to all who participated and for those who’d like to send a sample of their dog’s blood, contact:

DANA MOSHER
CGB/NHGR/NIH
50 South Drive
Bldg. 50, Room 5347
Bethesda, MD 20892-8000
mosherd@mail.nih.gov
(301) 451-9390

Get information on how to submit your dog’s blood sample.

Also, provide a copy of your dog’s pedigree. Information will be kept confidential.

The Ostrander Canine Genomics Laboratory is part of the National Human Genome Research Institute at the National Institute of Health.

We are searching for the genes responsible for the increased susceptibility of certain types of cancer in canines.

In the Portuguese Water Dog, we are particularly concerned with those genes that increase susceptibility to Hemangiosarcoma.
Dear PWD Club and Foundation,

The acquisition of over 300 blood samples in two days is unprecedented and speaks to the motivation of the club as well as the individual dog owners. We’ve done this sort of thing all over the country, and never have we encountered a club whose owners are so aware of the difference that every single sample makes to the success of a genetics project. We are deeply grateful to everyone who took time to bring their dog over for a sample collection and to the same people for providing us the detailed information we needed on each dog we sampled. We are also very appreciative of all the hard work the club and Foundation did to get the blood draw organized and make the logistics run as smoothly as they did. Finally, whether you had your dog drawn or not—we want to thank the PWD community. I’ve visited many clubs where it’s clear the owners love their breed. While I know you all feel that way too, it’s clear that the individual love you each feel for your dog comes first. That’s the kind of motivation that is going to help your breed continue to lead the country in genetic health research. Thank you to all for being our partners in this exciting and, we expect, successful venture.

Sincerely,

ELAINE A. OSTRANDER, PH.D.  Chief, Cancer Genetics Branch
NHGRI/NIH National Institutes of Health

Letters from the Researchers
Re: HEMANGIOSARCOMA
blood draw at 2005 PWDCA National Specialty

To the PWDCA and the PWD Foundation,

I’m glad all went so well! We are VERY pleased with this exceptional effort and guarantee we will continue our best efforts to make best use of the samples you provided to combat this dreadful disease. Your club, your Foundation, and your owners are to be commended on the dedication they bring to the health of their dogs. Thank you to all who participated in this aspect of our research.

JAIME F. MODIANO, V.M.D., PH.D.  AMC Cancer Center
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

PWD FOUNDATION and PWDCA Join Forces
in Successful Effort to Bring Attention To The HEALTH of the Breed

At the recent National Specialty, the PWDCA and the PWD Foundation joined forces to bring certain health issues to the forefront of this yearly gathering of PWD owners. Through the efforts of both organizations, there was a centralized location for health issues and testing. It was the H2O K9 HEALTH tent. It proved to be a very popular spot for all those interested in participating in the many health activities we had ongoing throughout the week. Cheek swabs for the Addison’s Disease research project were collected, DNA samples were taken for the AKC’s DNA Profile program, information on Juvenile Dilated Cardiomyopathy was available, and blood was collected from a record number - 308 PWD’s - for Hemangiosarcoma research. It was a hugely successful undertaking and one which will lead to a healthier future for all PWD’s.

Under the tent it was always busy!

From cheek swabs to blood draws to donations for the PWDF, there was a buzz of activity that never ceased.

A huge thank you to everyone who participated in making this joint effort a success.

This huge license plate like sign hung over the center of the tent - the PWDCA logo on one side and the PWD Foundation logo on the other. It was obvious that a special activity was in the works. When people asked where the blood was being drawn, it was easy to point to the H2O K9 HEALTH tent!

Perhaps we’ll see you at next year’s Specialty in Illinois for more health related activities! We surely couldn’t have asked for more dedicated participants. When it comes right down to it, Portuguese Water Dog owners are to be commended for their devotion to their dog’s health.
The PWD Foundation and the PWDCFA co-sponsored a seminar on **Juvenile Dilated Cardiomyopathy - JDCM** at the recent National Specialty - again, a huge success with a turnout of over 200 PWD owners and breeders. The seminar was presented by Dr. Meg Sleeper, Chief of the Section of Cardiology at the University of Pennsylvania and Paula Henthorn, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Section of Medical Genetics at the U of PA. These are the doctors who are overseeing the research at the University into our inherited puppy killer disease – JDCM. We even had two very special guests in attendance – Rosie and Phoebe – two 14 week old Peagles, Portuguese Water Dog/Beagle crosses – born at the U of PA as part of a test litter. They are currently in temporary foster homes until they’re 6 months of age. At that point they’ll be looking for permanent homes. They were quite active and put on a good show of spirit, fun, and good health. All the Attendees received “goodie bags” provided by the PWDF and many thanks to the PWDCFA for the “refreshments”. Anyone who may be interested, can get a transcript of the presentation by going to the PWDCFA’s and the Foundation’s websites. Thanks to everyone for all their efforts in making this event a success.

The ultimate long-term goal of the JDCM research is to find the underlying genetic defect by identifying linked genetic markers that could be used to detect carriers of JDCM. Many markers need to be genotyped before finding one that is linked to the JDCM locus, leading to a genetic test. To date, 74 markers have been collected and analyzed. Data has been collected from an additional 70 markers and will be analyzed in the near future. The bottom line is that many markers may have to be genotyped before one is found that is linked to the JDCM locus. DNA from affected dogs is required for this genetic linkage analysis project. The more DNA samples that can be provided, the more likely success becomes. A definitive diagnosis of JDCM must be obtained on puppies less than one year that die unexpectedly or with signs of heart disease.

The following facts regarding JDCM in the Portuguese Water Dog were presented by Drs. Sleeper and Henthorn.

- The disease appears to follow an **autosomal recessive pattern of inheritance**.
- It is characterized by gradual development of global cardiac dilatation and ventricular (pump) failure.
- It presents in **acute, infantile form** resulting in early myocardial failure and **death by 12 months of age**.
- The disease is **rapidly progressive** and often puppies die without a definitive diagnosis.
- **Lack of a definitive diagnosis allows the disease to continue to spread in the breeding population.**
- Post mortem diagnosis requires formalin fixed heart and lung tissue, frozen kidney, and 10cc of blood.
- Blood samples from close relatives to affecteds will also provide valuable DNA information.

The most important fact presented was that ALL puppy deaths need to be reported to Dr. Meg Sleeper. Without a definitive diagnosis of JDCM, critical information is lost to the research project and the gene continues to spread throughout the breeding population. This only increases the chance of more puppies dying unexpectedly. Information on what to do should a puppy die can be found on the PWDCFA web site [www.PWDCA.org](http://www.PWDCA.org). **Please report puppy deaths. All information remains confidential.**

Copies of the handout material presented at the seminar can be obtained through the PWD Foundation. Make the request through [info@pwdfoundation.org](mailto:info@pwdfoundation.org) and the PDF files will be e-mailed to you.

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**Confidentiality Of Participants In Research Funded By The PWDF, Inc.**

There are several research studies funded by the PWDF, Inc. for which participation of your dogs is and has been requested. Currently they are the Addison’s UC Davis Cheek Swab study, the Hemangiosarcoma study and the Juvenile Dilated Cardiomyopathy study. We are sure other research studies, as they become available to us in the future, will also need the participation of our dogs.

In all such research, all the individual dog information sent to the researchers, whether cheek swabs, blood or tissue samples or pedigrees, remains confidential with the researchers. **No information including participation or status of individual dogs is shared with the members of the PWDF, Inc.**

Only progress reports and statistics are provided to the Foundation. These reports and statistics are shared with you, the participants in the research and donors to the Foundation.
The Portuguese Water Dog Foundation, Inc. needs your help and support to fund breed-specific research to improve the quality of life and health of our Portuguese Water Dogs. Your **tax-deductible** donation, **in any amount**, would be greatly appreciated. In addition to personal donations, a donation may be made in memory or honor of a friend or loved one, whether human or canine. Donors’ names will be kept anonymous upon request.

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- **Captain** ($500 - $999);
- **Commodore** ($1000 or more)

**Yes, I want to do my part to help Portuguese Water Dogs.**

Enclosed is my check, in the amount of $ _______________, payable to PWDF, Inc.

Donations may be sent to: PWDF, Inc. P.O. Box 790 Oaks, PA 19456-0790

(or) Donor should be listed as:

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*Thank you for your generosity and support of the Portuguese Water Dog Foundation, Inc.*

**Recognized under IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Status - Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible**

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Along with our financial Founders and all of our supporters, we wish to acknowledge and thank the eleven original Founding Members of the Portuguese Water Dog Foundation:

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Charles Schreiber
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Lana Woodburn (retired)
Bobbie Babbitt (retired)

Your contributions can and do make a difference to the Foundation’s pursuit of a healthy future for all Portuguese Water Dogs.

Thank You!