

ABCF MESSENGER

Official Newsletter of the American Boxer Charitable Foundation

March 2017



CELEBRATING 22 YEARS

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is truly an exciting time for research impacting our boxers. Boxers are involved in promising studies researching cancer immunology that is helping human researchers. DM research that was funded partially by ABCF led to exciting findings and potential treatments for DM and ALS. Dr. Coates research is now being funded by ALS and NIH. Florida University thinks that the animal research being done is so integral to human studies they have dubbed their program "One Medicine". Now more than ever we need to continue to fund these exciting studies for the future of our beloved boxers and for ourselves and loved ones!

Over the years ABCF has raised over \$2,000,000 to canine research. We are currently supporting several exciting studies and the need is great! This edition of the newsletter showcases several of the studies ABCF is supporting and one boxer owners experience participating in clinical trial.

You can support ABCF by renewing your membership for 2017. A membership form is included in the newsletter or you can go online to renew at http://www.abcfoundation.org/membership_form.html . You can support ABCF through donations to the Memorial Wall, Kudos or Endowment fund and support events like the auction at ABC.

Thank you to everyone who has supported ABCF over the years and those that continue to support us. Our work is not over and is more important now than ever!

Respectfully,

William C. Truesdale, D.V.M.

President

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FROM THE TREASURER

It has been an exciting time for the ABCF. Thanks to our loyal boxer owners, we are able to support several cancer grants including lymphoma, brain, osteosarcoma and hemangiosarcoma. In addition we are supporting a gene study for dilated cardiomyopathy at the University of Florida and continue to support DM research. Thanks to our supporters and members, we are able to be one of the largest canine foundations in the world.

We hope you will consider renewing your membership. To do so, you can go online to print the form or pay online. <http://www.abcfoundation.org/>

The 2017 auction information is also on the website. Please join us on Tuesday May 9 for our dinner and auction. The membership dues and the auction proceeds allow us to fund the many research projects in an effort to increase the longevity of this wonderful breed....

And last but not least, you still have time to enter the ABCF/Top Twenty raffle for the free rooms at the ABC. Due to Paypal restrictions, the entry must be made by mail or by credit card. If you want to pay by credit card, you can call me at 301 775-5089. If you want to mail a check, the form is at: <http://www.abcfoundation.org/2016-room-raffle.html>

See you in May...

Best regards,

Joyce Baker Brown
Treasurer
American Boxer Charitable Foundation
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301 775-5089



ABCF MESSENGER

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From the Editor

A recent peek at the calendar induced some mild panic- the American Boxer Club National show is now just 2 months away!! As you are busy training your dogs, making your travel plans and planning all your adventures for the week remember ABCF!! The ABCF Charity Dinner and auction is held at the ABC show site and is the biggest fundraiser of the year!

Start thinking now about items you can donate to the ABCF auction. Items large and small are appreciated and needed. Make sure you plan to attend the ABCF Dinner and live auction on Tuesday night. The auction is always a lively and entertaining event. Watch for more information on how to donate items and make your dinner reservations.

Rebecca Gilchrist



Peanut butter Pumpkin treats

2 ½ cup wheat flour ¼ cup Peanut butter
2 eggs ½ teaspoon salt
1 cup canned pumpkin ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix together flour, eggs, pumpkin, peanut butter, salt and cinnamon in a bowl. Add water as needed to make dough workable but dough should be dry and stiff. Roll into ½ inch thick roll. Cut into ½ inch pieces. Bake in oven until hard, about 40 minutes.

ABCF MESSENGER

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Our Experience participating in a clinical trial—with Tom Latta

Participating in a clinical trial is one of the most important ways we can help advance the science that is improving the life of our boxers. Participation can be as easy as sending a blood or DNA sample or more involved clinical trials. Thomas and Carol Latta recently were able to participate in the DM clinical trials being conducted by Dr. Joan Coates at the University of Missouri with their boxer Lyric (CH Lattalane's Irish Lyric). They share some of their experience with us.

Tell a little bit about the DM study Lyric are participated in: The clinical trials being conducted by Dr. Joan Coates at the University of Missouri – Columbia is a blinded study to test the effectiveness of an experimental treatment to delay the progression of Degenerative Myelopathy (DM), which is a progressive disease of the spinal cord in older dogs, most notably Boxers, Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, French Bulldogs, German Shepherds, Pembroke & Cardigan Welsh Corgis, Rhodesian Ridgebacks and Standard Poodles. The disease typically appears between 8 and 14 years of age. It begins with a loss of coordination in the hind limbs, causing the affected dog to wobble when walking, knuckle over or drag the feet. This can first occur in one hind limb and then affect the other, as the limbs become weak, feet begin to buckle under, standing becomes difficult and eventually walking is not possible. Within 6-12 months from onset, the dog becomes paraplegic, eventually losing urinary and fecal control and developing weakness in the front limbs.

Why did you decide to participate in the study? DM is a disease that in some ways is more painful to us as owners, than to the dog which does not experience pain from DM itself. Over 50% of our Boxer breed has been shown to be “at risk” for developing Degenerative Myelopathy, though many never develop the disease as they lose their battles with heart disease or cancer before reaching that 8-14 year range. Lyric was the first Boxer bred by LattaLane Boxers that actually developed the disease.

Participation in this extremely important clinical trial required the dog to make monthly overnight visits to the University of Missouri – Columbia, which limits the accessibility to the study for most Boxer owners. We are fortunate enough to live a little over an hour away from Columbia MO, making the drive doable.

Tell us a little bit about the researchers at Missouri and how you were treated: When we first entered the study and subsequent trials over a year ago, we worked with Dr. Joan Coates and her assistant Dr. Daniella Vansteenkiste. They were each the most supportive and empathetic of Lyric's journey with DM.

Carol and I had a two week vacation planned and paid for last May, and Daniella (we got to be on a first name basis) offered to keep Lyric at her home during that time, allowing us to truly enjoy a much needed vacation knowing Lyric would be receiving the best care possible while we were away!

ABCF MESSENGER

Official Newsletter of the American Boxer Charitable Foundation

Daniella moved on to Ohio State University Veterinary Medical Center last summer, and her replacement Dr. Katherine Bibi has been every bit as supportive and helpful.

What benefits do you think people get from participating in research studies? The opportunity to contribute to the improvement to the health and betterment of our breed! And because DM is the canine equivalent to Lou Gehrig's disease, this study and clinical trial can hopefully help in the treatment of that disease.

What Advice do you have for people considering getting involved with a study? If you can make the commitment to participate in the study and trial.....do it! You'll be making an investment in the future of your breed and your beloved Boxers.

Update-Lyrics own journey and battle with DM ended on December 14, 2016, although not from DM. She had received her 15th injection on Dec 6 and came home as usual ambulatory and on all 4 legs, though wobbly (this is well beyond the normal progression of the disease where dogs cannot walk after 12 months). A week later she was unable to get up at all and radiographs showed the development of a massive and aggressive tumor which had not been seen during her visit Dec 6. Thomas and Carol made the difficult decision to say goodbye. The DM study Lyric participated in was a blind study so Tom and Carol cannot be sure she received the treatments but with the extended progression of the disease and being able to walk 16 months after diagnoses they are very hopeful that the study will hold promises for treatment. Dr. Coates is empathic that Lyric's contribution to the study will prove to be the most significant to date!

Update on DM Research

By Dr. Joan Coates, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVIM-Neurology
Professor, Veterinary Neurology & Neurosurgery

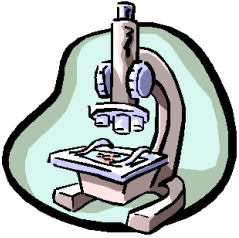
The clinical trial for the antisense oligonucleotide therapy is continuing to move forward but we are still in need of study participants. The major challenges of meeting the inclusion criteria are having the patient early in the disease process and also being within a reasonable driving distance. We have 5 dogs currently in the study, which is designed for 12 dogs. (If you are interested in learning more about inclusion in the study email Dr. Coates at coatesj@missouri.edu).

We also will have another clinical trial investigating a gene therapy approach, which will start this spring.

I do want to express my sincere gratitude to all the dogs who have been a part of the study for DM. Also to their owners/care givers who dedicate so much of their time and efforts to make these studies possible. I know that the study was a challenge for everyone who participates. All of these efforts help put the 'puzzle' together.

ABCF MESSENGER

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Research Updates- Your ABCF Dollars at work!

Update on Research Project 02234-MOU: A Novel Approach for Prevention of Canine Hemangiosarcoma

By Jaime F. Modiano, VMD, PhD (Principal Investigator)

Hemangiosarcoma is the cause of death for one out of every five Golden Retrievers in the United States. Portuguese Water Dogs and Boxers also have an especially high risk for this disease. This disease is incurable partly because it is detected at a very advanced stage when it is resistant to conventional therapies. Thus, an unconventional approach to improve outcomes for hemangiosarcoma would involve effective methods for early detection and for disease prevention. For this project we will do precisely that by pairing two novel technologies consisting of a patented test to detect hemangiosarcoma cells in blood samples and a treatment that attacks the cells that establish and maintain the disease.

Over the past 6-months, we have made substantial progress toward objective-1, "To confirm that our patented test can detect hemangiosarcoma cells in the circulation prior to the onset of grossly detectable disease." Specifically we have:

1. Verified that if we add hemangiosarcoma cells from tumors we have cultured in our laboratory to blood samples from unaffected dogs that are healthy and do not have any evidence of having hemangiosarcoma, other cancers, or other diseases (what we call spiking), we can detect those cells using our patented assay with currently available reagents
2. Established a threshold for detection of these "spiked" hemangiosarcoma cells. In other words, the smallest number of cells that must be present in a blood sample in order for us to detect them. This is done per unit of measure, for example cells per microliter, where a standard drop of blood equals about 20-30 microliters
3. Confirmed that there is a direct relationship between the number of cells spiked into a blood sample and the number of cells we detect in the assay
4. Advanced confirmation that the markers used for our test do not detect cells in blood of dogs with non-malignant splenic disease (nodular hyperplasia with hematoma)
5. Advanced confirmation that the markers used for our test do not detect cells in blood from dogs with other cancers (osteosarcoma and lymphoma)
6. Identified technical obstacles that need refinement in the test (antibody interference)
7. Started a systematic search for other targets using our RNAseq databanks
8. Started testing a new robotic system to enrich circulating tumor cells from blood samples.

ABCF MESSENGER

Official Newsletter of the American Boxer Charitable Foundation

Update on Grant 02215: A cancer Vaccine for Osteosarcoma

By Dr. Rowan J Milner, BVSc University of Florida

The investigators wish to thank the AKC Canine Health Foundation for supporting our research. Since the start of the study we have enrolled 8 dogs from various breeds with osteosarcoma. Seven dogs were able to complete the full course of the vaccine and chemotherapy. Unfortunately one dogs had such a malignant osteosarcoma that she was only able to complete two cycles of chemotherapy and one vaccine. Of the seven dogs that completed the chemotherapy cycles and four vaccines, two were subsequently euthanized due to early metastases. Owners were gracious in granting permission for a full necropsy of these two dogs. The results were very insightful. While the two dogs did show progression of their osteosarcoma because of metastases, no evidence of lung metastases was found on necropsy. One dog had small (1cm in diameter) nodules both kidney and the other had a similar small number of metastases in bone. While the results are still very early they seem to indicate that the vaccination plus the chemotherapy may have a modifying effect on the metastatic process of osteosarcoma. While the other five dogs are still alive their survival time is still too early to draw conclusion. We are also pleased that we were able to add value to the study by developing flow cytometer panels monitoring the dog's immune cells as the vaccine and the chemotherapy are given. Early data shows that some of the immune cells that either support the immune system to fight osteosarcoma or allow the cancer to hide by making the body tolerant to the cancer are changed as we vaccinate and give chemotherapy. Indeed, all dogs on entry to the study have shown higher numbers of these cells compared to normal dogs. The cell numbers changed overtime and increased when the cancer came back. While all of these findings are early we are nevertheless excited by the results and look forward to enrolling new cases.



Looking for Boxers to participate in research study

Acepromazine sensitivity has been documented in dogs with the ABCB1-1Delta mutation (also known as the MDR1 mutation). The ABCB1-1Delta mutation is commonly identified in herding breed dogs. However, because the ABCB1-1Delta mutation was recently identified in a purebred Boxer, we hypothesize that acepromazine sensitivity in Boxer dogs may also be the result of the ABCB1-1Delta mutation. Thus, our goal is to genotype 1,000 Boxer dogs for the ABCB1-1Delta mutation to determine its frequency in purebred Boxer dogs.

From the Researcher: We would like to hear from owners whose dogs have received acepromazine and experienced an adverse reaction. We need to have medical records to document the dose and adverse event, and we would provide MDR1 genotyping at no charge (cheek swab DNA sample).

Contact information --kmealey@vetmed.wsu.edu



Spotlight on ABCF Heroes

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Every Foundation has special people that go above and beyond to help the organization and find creative ways to support the cause. Today we spotlight Michelle Taylor. Michelle creates a calendar each year and all proceeds are donated to ABCF.

What made you decide to do this fundraiser for ABCF? We fell in love with the Boxer breed before we knew anything about any of the health risks that plagued them and it saddens me to this day that the Boxer has a double digit club. Over the years I've seen so many young dogs pass at 4, 6, and 8 years old. That and after a few years of pet store calendars I desperately wanted a calendar that featured a more correct Boxer type... and the idea of the calendar was born. We chose the ABCF as a fundraiser because of the endowment fund. We love how the endowment fund only spends the interest raised which means any proceeds generated are able to help fund health research for the boxers year after year. For us that is a win win!

How do you go about collecting all the photos for the calendar? Each year the main months and cover pages are auctioned off and the owners provide the photos. Most of the time the design work for these months are done by myself. We also sell the days of the month for \$5 each, here the owners can provide a photo and list the dog's name. If the dog has passed we will include a heart indicating they are loved and not forgotten.

How much money has the calendar raised for ABCF? In three years the calendar has raised \$8945.21 and this year we will surpass the \$10,000 mark.

What can you say to those thinking about organizing a fund raiser effort for ABCF? I would say get your Nikes out and just Do it our Boxers will only benefit.



ABCF MESSENGER

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

Any time is the appropriate time to renew your membership in the American Boxer Charitable Foundation, Inc but membership does run for the calendar year and needs to be renewed for 2017. The Foundation was created to fund research into the health problems that affect our beloved breed.

Support the research to help our Boxers live longer and healthier lives by becoming a member (or rejoining) of the American Boxer Charitable Foundation.

You can easily join online at: http://www.abcfoundation.org/membership_form.html

Or you can complete the form below and mail.

1. Select your membership level:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other

2. Select how you want to receive the ABCF Newsletter:

Online Via US Mail (There is an additional fee of \$10 annually)

Pay by check or money order payable to the American Boxer Charitable Foundation or use MasterCard or Visa to join or renew your membership. You can also join, renew or pay online via our website.

Amount: _____ Method of payment: Check Money Order MasterCard Visa

Signature: _____

Account Number: _____ Expires: _____ CVC: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Complete form and mail to:

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