

## PPCP Program Helps Parent Clubs Raise Funding for Canine Health Research



BY BARBARA FAWVER

**A** healthy payday is coming soon to the 193 parent clubs that participated in the 2017 Purina Parent Club Partnership (PPCP) program.

When Purina disburses the 2017 PPCP program earnings of \$455,085 this spring – half going directly to the participating parent clubs and half to the clubs' Donor Advised Fund at the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) – many clubs already will know which research they want to invest in to better their breed and dogs everywhere.

The Labrador Retriever Club (LRC), a charter member club, has received a whopping \$874,559 since the PPCP program began in 2002. Earning the largest payout to any club in 2017, LRC will receive a check for \$32,602, and \$32,602 also will be deposited in the club's CHF Donor Advised Fund.

"Without PPCP, we would not have been able to fund even half of the research to which we have contributed," says Dr. Fran Smith, LRC health chair. "Every year, we use our PPCP money, typically choosing the studies that fit best and help the most people and dogs."

### PPCP Generates \$7 Million

The PPCP program has come a long way since it began in 2002 with 62 clubs participating and a total payout of \$84,529 that year. Including 2017, more than \$7 million has been raised through PPCP.

"Our PPCP program has built a powerful legacy of helping parent clubs fund important research," says Purina Director of Conformation Ann Viklund, a member of the CHF board of directors. "When you look at the wealth of research that has led to many discoveries, this work often impacts not only the health of an individual breed but all dogs. Purina is proud to offer PPCP and to partner with the AKC Canine Health Foundation."

Despite a lot of progress being made over the past 15 years, some parent clubs don't take advantage of the opportunity to put their CHF Donor Advised Fund dollars directly to work to support canine health research. "Some clubs may not fully understand how easy it is to choose research to support," says Dr. Diane Brown, CEO of the AKC Canine Health Foundation. "We mail statements twice a year to every club showing the balance of their CHF Donor Advised Fund, which is made up of PPCP earnings plus

donations from individuals and other gifts."

In an effort to encourage clubs to put their CHF Donor Advised Funds to work for canine health research, the CHF is introducing a matching-gift initiative called CHOICE, which stands for Canine Health Opportunity to Impact CarE. When clubs transfer money from their Donor Advised Fund to a CHF research program of their choice, the AKC will match up to \$250,000 in 2018.

"The idea is to give clubs the opportunity and choice to support an area of health research of specific interest to their club," Dr. Brown says.

### PPCP Supports Breed Philanthropy

Like all parent clubs, LRC depends on donations from members and benefactors to support its research, rescue and educational efforts. Even when the economy is booming, it can be tough vying for charitable gifts to support breed philanthropy. The PPCP earnings have helped the club underwrite important breed research, such as a CHF grant awarded to Dr. James R. Mickelson at the University of Minnesota that led to finding the genetic mutation for exercise-induced collapse (EIC).

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"The discovery of the gene mutation for EIC has been our biggest success story," Dr. Smith says. "Everyone thought it was caused by a metabolic effect of food or from dogs working strenuously in high temperatures. No one wanted to admit EIC was a genetic disease."

Primarily a disorder affecting hunting and field trial Labrador Retrievers, EIC causes dogs to become weak and collapse after five to 20 minutes of hard work. Most dogs fully recover in 30 minutes, though EIC can be fatal. Before the gene mutation discovery, EIC was confused with other conditions that cause dogs to collapse, such as heat stroke, low blood sugar and diseases of the muscular, nervous, cardiovascular, and respiratory systems.

The EIC mutation, discovered in the canine dynamin 1 (DNM1) gene, has an autosomal pattern of inheritance, meaning affected dogs inherit a copy of the mutation from both their sire and dam. At the time of the discovery in 2007, a high percentage of Labradors tested had EIC or were carriers. The development of a direct DNA test for EIC offered by the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Minnesota turned the tables by allowing breeders to selectively breed dogs to prevent producing EIC-affected dogs.

"Given the certainty of this test, no dog needs to be totally excluded from a breeding program," says Dr. Smith. "You don't want to reproduce a genotypically and clinically affected dog, but a dog with two copies of the abnormal gene can be bred for other genetic characteristics, as long as you breed to a clear dog, producing carrier offspring but no affected offspring. In the next generation, you can maintain the positive qualities while eliminating the bad."

### PPCP Helps

#### Advance Canine Health

Besides LRC, the National Beagle Club and German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America are clubs that maximize their participation

### How the PPCP Program Works

- **Members of Purina Pro Club must declare participation in the Purina Parent Club Partnership (PPCP) program and designate their national parent club. The parent club also must be enrolled in the PPCP program.**
- **Pro Club members earn Purina Points by purchasing qualifying Purina pet foods and submitting proof of purchase.**
- **Purina donates 10 percent of qualifying points earned by Pro Club members who participate in the PPCP program. An annual distribution is made by Purina, with half of the distribution going to the designated breed club and the other half to the club's Donor Advised Fund at the AKC Canine Health Foundation to support canine health research.**
- **To begin earning Purina Points for your breed club, log on to your account at [purinaproclub.com](http://purinaproclub.com) and make sure your profile shows you are participating in PPCP. If you are not yet a member, you also can join Pro Club at that website. For information about using Donor Advised Funds at the AKC Canine Health Foundation, call 888-682-9696 or contact [chfgrants@akcchf.org](mailto:chfgrants@akcchf.org).**

in PPCP through CHF Donor Advised Fund research funding. This funding, with support from several clubs, has particularly impacted research of epilepsy and cruciate ligament disease.

Since 2014, more than \$500,000 has been awarded in CHF research grants to support epilepsy research, of which \$100,000 has come from clubs' Donor Advised Funds. Similarly, since 2011, \$300,000 has been awarded for research of cruciate ligament disease, of which nearly \$89,000 has come from Donor Advised Funds supporting seven CHF grants.

Although not all research leads to breakthroughs, findings that are published in peer-reviewed journal articles help to advance understanding. Of the 25 CHF grants LRC has supported using its PPCP funds, nearly 50 peer-reviewed publications in scientific and veterinary journals have resulted.

"The impact of a club's investment in research is demonstrated through peer-reviewed scientific publications," says Dr. Brown. "This is the gold standard measure of scientific progress, and gets the results out to the veterinarians, breeders, the public, and other researchers. By clubs putting their Purina PPCP dollars to work, they are helping to advance canine health."

### Top 10 Parent Clubs in 2017 PPCP Earnings

Parent Club	2017 Total PPCP Earnings*	Cumulative PPCP Earnings**
Labrador Retriever Club	\$65,205	\$874,559
National Beagle Club	\$24,534	\$376,543 (joined in 2004)
Treering Walker Breeders & Fanciers	\$21,035	\$258,965 (joined in 2003)
German Shepherd Dog Club of America	\$20,071	\$358,211
Golden Retriever Club of America	\$17,910	\$239,324
German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America	\$14,220	\$185,311
American Field Pointer Association	\$9,617	\$81,442 (joined in 2006)
Great Dane Club of America	\$9,302	\$156,445
Dachshund Club of America	\$8,164	\$135,762
American Boxer Club	\$7,522	\$146,459

\*Includes distributions to the parent club and to the club's Donor Advised Fund at the AKC Canine Health Foundation

\*\* Represents cumulative distributions since PPCP began in 2002, unless a different membership start date is indicated. Includes distributions to the parent club and to the club's Donor Advised Fund at the AKC Canine Health Foundation