

HERITAGE SOCIETY

Newsletter



"Anyone who reaches down to pet their dog should support canine health research!"

**-Merry Jeanne and
Tommy Millner**

CHF supporters since 2001

The AKC Canine Health Foundation's Heritage Society honors donors who have made a commitment to the Foundation through a planned gift.

THE AKC CANINE HEALTH FOUNDATION: ADVANCING CANINE HEALTH

Since 1995, research funded by the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) has resulted in 828 peer-reviewed publications cited more than 31,000 times, demonstrating the impact of the work that you help make possible.

In 2020, CHF awarded \$3.29 million in 53 new grants, addressing health concerns such as degenerative myelopathy, allergic dermatitis, uterine infections, oncology, and more. Among the many highlights from 2020, CHF-funded researchers found a genetic mutation responsible for adverse drug reactions in several dog breeds. CHF-funded researchers also issued breed, sex, and body-size based guidelines on the best age to spay or neuter a dog for 35 breeds and mixed breeds. Additionally, CHF supported the publication of the *Review of the Current State of Genetic Testing* as a resource for breeders, dog owners, and veterinary professionals to understand the proper use and limitations of canine genetic testing.

Once again in 2020, CHF maintained Charity Navigator's highest four-star rating and received a Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar, indicating that we meet and exceed industry standards for fiscal responsibility.

"WE NEED TO DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF OUR CURRENT DOGS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF DOGS."

An Interview with Merry Jeanne and Tommy Millner, Heritage Society Members since 2004

Merry Jeanne and Tommy Millner have been breeding and showing Briards under the Sendero kennel name for more than 30 years. Their love affair with dogs began when the couple acquired their first Briard and were encouraged to complete some basic obedience training with her. An avid obedience and conformation competitor, their obedience instructor at the time introduced the Millners to dog sports. After a childhood spent showing American Saddlebred horses, Merry Jeanne was excited about the similar opportunity to show dogs.

Sendero is Spanish for 'a clear path.' For the Millners, breeding healthier dogs and supporting canine health research has always been an important part of their path.

Q: How did you first learn about the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF)?

A: A good friend from the dog world (also a breeder and judge) encouraged us to get involved with the Foundation. She knew how important good health was in our breeding program and in our life with dogs. It was a natural fit!

Q: Why did you choose the AKC Canine Health Foundation as a beneficiary in your will?

A: Supporting the Foundation is important for several reasons. The research is needed to understand and treat the diseases that take our dogs from us too soon. Our support demonstrates to outsiders the fancy's commitment to producing healthy purebred dogs. Finally, CHF does a great job of sharing the research results with the fancy, ensuring that breeders and dog owners have access to the latest canine health information.

Q: How has AKC Canine Health Foundation funded research impacted you and your dogs?

A: One of our early dogs had malignant melanoma and participated in a clinical trial that helped develop the melanoma vaccine. That vaccine is now used to treat humans and dogs, including our dog's granddaughter.

Q: What do you tell others considering a planned gift to the AKC Canine Health Foundation?

A: We need to do everything we can to improve the health of our current dogs and future generations of dogs. Canine health research often benefits humans as well. For example, the study of stationary night blindness in Briards also led to a cure for the disease in humans. Anyone who reaches down to pet their dog should support canine health research!



Merry Jeanne and Tommy Millner

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The AKC Canine Health Foundation is dedicated to advancing the health of all dogs and their owners by funding scientific research and supporting the dissemination of health information to prevent, treat and cure canine disease.