

Update – Marvin D. Nelson, Jr. Memorial Fund is Now Endowed

Very good news, the goal of \$10,000 has been met to endow the Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund. This was achieved by the dedicated forward looking approach by the American Brittany Club Board of Directors which voted to donate \$5,000 initially and give \$1,000 annually until the BOD would vote differently to the Memorial Fund. It is also noteworthy that at the National Show on November 27th, 2004 one half of the proceeds raised from the annual auction went to the Memorial Fund. Many members were responsible for this support and most noteworthy was the guidance given by Nancy Clendenen, Judy Tighe and the auctioneer Tony Morabito. Tony was superb in support of the Memorial Fund and the amount raised was \$325.

Several ABC members gave graciously and some in living memory of their outstanding Amateur and National Field Champions. These dogs along with individual donors giving \$500 or more will have name plates placed on the large Marvin D Nelson Jr. Endowed Memorial Fund Plaque that will be placed in the CCAH for those bringing their dogs to the Clinic or visiting to see.

The money raised beyond \$10,000 will not be spent on research until a sizeable amount of money is given to enable meaningful investigation to be accomplished. When that figure is determined, an announcement will be made. This does not mean research will not be done on the Brittany until more money is raised. On the contrary, there is ongoing research involving the Brittany and future investigators will attract matching funds from the AKC Health Foundation, which supports the CCAH presently, and other granting agencies to do Brittany research. One scientific paper has been published entitled "Analysis of Genetic Variation in 28 Breed Populations With 100 Microsatellite Markers", in Journal of Heredity 2003:94 (1):81-87 by D.N. Irion, et al from the Veterinary Genetics Laboratory, CCAH, UCD, Sch. of Vet. Med. This study was made possible by the collection of samples several years ago from Brittans, many collected at the Nationals in Booneville and Fort Smith by Gordon Theilen DVM. In summary from that publication, "While the set of autosomal microsatellites was useful in describ-

ing genetic variation within breeds, establishing the genetic relatedness between breeds was less conclusive. A more accurate determination of breed phylogeny will likely require the use of single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNP's)". In less technical terms, more studies will be conducted using recently developed techniques to look at breed differences. Some aspects will be done in the next few months comparing the gene profile of the French Brittany and the American Brittany in comparison with other believed closely related breeds. The Brittany DNA samples previously collected has initially made it possible to study and expand upon future Brittany DNA research at UCD, CCAH.

The ABC/BOD in 2004 voted, in addition, to pursue establishment of a Brittany DNA Library at the CCAH, Division of Veterinary Genetics in conjunction with AKC Health Foundation. If this is approved by AKC, BOD, the Brittany along with two to three other breeds will be in a pilot project to collect DNA samples from as many dogs as voluntarily made available including litters to study, genetic defects, cancer, health and traits. It is hoped around a 50 percent compliance from Brittany breeders and owners will be accomplished. What a wonderful potential benefit for our breed. This opportunity was made possible because of establishment of the Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund as the personnel in CCAH recognized the dedication by ABC for implementing Brittany DNA research.

Northern California Brittany Club held its annual membership meeting at the CCAH on December 11th. Members and guests attended a seminar on dog genetics and tour of the CCAH. All in attendance were impressed with the research being done and potential for the future and the work place where research is conducted. In support of suggestion made by the ABCBOD meeting on November 27th, that each regional club that has the resources donate \$500 to the Marvin Nelson Memorial Fund, NCBC graciously met that goal and more. Northern Oklahoma BC and The United States Open Championship Association has also met this goal. Many other regional club members have indicated a desire to give in the near future as well as several individual members. It was by divine providence that the Nelson family had the foresight to set up a memorial fund in memory of three generations of Nelsons to study health, cancer and genetic defects of the Brittany. Through ABC member efforts their memories will live forever in dedication to improving the health of the Brittany.

If there are questions about funds raised or research being done that has not been communicated to date, please contact Kelly Nimitz at the Development office, <Kjnimitz@ucdavis.edu>, his assistant in charge of the Nelson Memorial development, Kristine Reveles <klreveles@ucdavis.edu> or research <ncpedersen@ucdavis.edu> or <ghtheilen@ucdavis.edu>.

All at UCD, Vet.Med development office and CCAH are totally behind the Nelson Memorial effort and this first for the Brittany Breed. All funds raised will be used to enlarge the endowed fund and eventually used to study exclusively health, cancer and genetic defects of the Brittany. What a memorable year 2004 was for the dedicated steps taken by ABC involving ongoing and enlarging the possibilities to investigate future health of the Brittany through DNA research. The Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund web site <www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/.CCAH> or links on the American Brittany web site, <<http://clubs.akc.org/brit/>>.

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

should be in at least 45 days prior to the Expiration Date on the top line of the mailing label in order to ensure continuous delivery.

Renewals may be sent directly to the Membership Data Chairman, the information is on page 3.

Marvin D. Nelson, Jr. Memorial Fund *for Studies of Brittany Health and Genetic Research*

A Memorial fund has been established at the University of California at Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, Center for Companion Animal Health (CAAH) in memory of Marvin D. Nelson, Jr. who died May 31st, 2004.

The Marvin D. Nelson, Jr. Memorial Fund has been established by his family as a tribute to Marvin and the three generations of Nelsons who devoted themselves to the welfare of the Brittany breed. This fund will be dedicated to finding solutions to better understand and prevent leading inherited defects, cancer and other genetic diseases related to the Brittany.

A contribution to the Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund would be a fitting way to acknowledge all that Marvin has done for Brittany's. Gifts to the fund can also be made in memory or in honor of a beloved Brittany(s), family members or friends. Donors who give \$500 or more will have their names placed on the Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial plaque to be hung in the new Center for Companion Animal Health. You may also access the Center website at <http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ccah/> (choose Gifts/Memorial – specify “Nelson” on gift contribution form).

The purpose of this memorial is to find solutions to better understand and prevent leading inherited defects, cancer and other genetic diseases related to

the Brittany. This will be a “first” for our breed, having specific medical research just for the Brittany. Dr. Gordon Theilen, initiator of the Center before he retired, has agreed to keep all donors and Brittany lovers updated on research in the Brittany being conducted at the UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine Center for Companion Animal Health in an annual report. One study is presently in progress, the comparison of the Brittany DNA profile to that of other breeds.

The benefits from this research would improve the strength of our breed. What a wonderful way for us to help our beloved Brittany with studies done at a leading animal health center, internationally known for its dedication to research excellence.

Please complete and return this form (below) with gift to:

*Center for Companion Animal Health
c/o Dean's Office – Development
School of Veterinary Medicine
University of California
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616-8734*

Checks may be payable to: *UC Regents*

Please send note or indicate on check that this be for the **“Marvin D. Nelson, Jr Memorial Fund”**.

Yes! I (we) would like to support the Marvin D. Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund at the Center for Companion Animal Health

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

- Enclosed is my (our) check, paid to **UC Regents**
 VISA/Mastercard (\$25 minimum)

CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____ NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE _____

- \$1,000 or more (become a *Friend of Companion Animals*)
 \$500
 \$250
 \$100
 \$50
 \$ _____ other
 Enclosed is a matching gift form from my company

This is a (memorial tribute) gift on behalf of:

NAMES(S) _____

a special person dog cat other

Please make this gift known to:

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

- Please send information about including the Center for Companion Animal Health (CAAH) in my (our) will and estate plans.

The information you will provide will be used for university business and will not be released unless required by law. To review your record, contact Advancement Services, 1480 Drew Avenue, Suite 130, Davis, CA 95616. A portion of all gifts is used to defray the costs of administering the funds. All gifts are tax-deductible as prescribed by law.