

PBGV Health & Rescue Foundation

Letter from the President – Health of the individual and the breed



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The mission of the Health & Rescue Foundation is to promote the welfare of the breed by providing funding for research, education, and rescue.

PBGV health is a central focus of the Foundation. An individual PBGV may be a sterling example of the breed standard, but if he isn't healthy underneath those tousled locks, then we have failed him. When we consider PBGV health, we look from two perspectives.

The individual PBGV. Each person who looks at a litter hoping to bring a PBGV into their home has a slightly different perspective on which puppy is best for them. The person aiming for Best of Breed, the hunting enthusiast, the performance owner, and the pet person all look at structure, gait, and temperament with a different eye. But all of those eyes should focus on the health of the puppy.

We gain some insights into the future health of the puppy by looking at the pedigree. The PBGVCA **Pedigree Project** collects information on health tests that individual PBGVs have had and health problems that have cropped up. It is so important to be open about health problems. If swept under the rug, they don't disappear. They are almost always discovered in the future, by which time they may have spread in the breed.

So please visit the Pedigree Project webpage and submit updated information on your PBGVs. Go to <https://pbgv.org/pedigree/ped-home.shtml>.

The breed as a whole. Two ways that we can assess the health of the breed as a whole are by documenting the outer, observable health of a large proportion of the population and by examining the inner, genetic makeup of the breed.

We learn about the outer, observable health of the breed by asking you questions and looking at the answers in aggregate. Yes, I am talking about a health survey. We have written a **SNAPSHOT** survey, so called because it will result in a snapshot of PBGV health in 2020. For this survey, we don't want to know about all the Peebs you've loved before (apologies to Julio Iglesias); instead, we want to know about your current love. Please look in this issue of *Saber Tails* for the snapshot of my beloved Zoe and learn how you can fill out a survey. All responses are confidential.

We need to know about your PBGV's health to plan health programs and seminars, and to fund relevant research.

The inner health, or genetic makeup of the breed, is not as readily observable, but it is just as important. A healthy breed has **genetic diversity**. That means that members of the population are not clones but have unique variation in their genetic composition. Please look in this issue of *Saber Tails* for my article on diversity, "Once Lost, Genetic Diversity is Gone Forever". You will be hearing more in the future about our efforts to assess and maintain the genetic diversity of the PBGV population.

Laura

