The 9th Biennial National Parent Club Canine Health Conference was held August 9-11 2013 at the Hyatt Regency in St. Louis.

Dr. Laura Harpel
HRCC

In keeping with the AKC Canine Health Foundation's vision "to address the health needs of all dogs across their lifetime by focusing on all aspects of their physical, mental, and social well-being", the conference presenters offered a wealth of cutting edge information on topics ranging from the genius of dogs to the latest developments in canine cancer research.

Dr. Brian Hare's keynote presentation 'The Genius of the Dog' offered revolutionary new insights into dog intelligence and the interior lives of this important human companion.

The Bloat Initiative that was launched in 2013 has garnered over $415,000 in sponsorships to study this devastating health problem. A free webinar is now available for club educational programs.

Drs. Matthew Breen and Jaime Modiano presented exciting updates in their cancer research that will significantly improve the understanding and diagnosis of canine cancers, ultimately enabling canine patients to live longer, healthier lives. Dr. Modiano's research on hemangiosarcoma has documented that tumor cells can differentiate along different cell lines (myeloid, adipose and vascular lineages) and the ongoing work seeks to determine the interactions between the tumor cells and their microenvironment that determine which line predominates and factors that provide a safe niche for tumor growth and progression. It is hoped that disruption of the niche will delay or prevent metastasis, and more importantly, protect tumor sites from hemorrhage (the most common lethal event in this disease).

Dr. Breen has focused on the application of molecular cytogenetics in the analysis of neoplasms. A remarkable similarity exists between the human and dog genomes, which places the dog in a position of high visibility as a model system for cancer research. His research has demonstrated that canine tumors contain the natural variety of chromosome aberrations that are observed in the corresponding human cancers (a feature not evident with induced tumors in rodents). Currently his team is investigating this hypothesis in a variety of leading cancers in dogs, including lymphoma, leukemia, osteosarcoma, histiocytic neoplasia, hemangiosarcoma, melanoma, and other malignancies.

Dr. Sherman Canapp discussed recent progress in the Foundation's ongoing Canine Athlete Initiative in using regenerative medicine to treat orthopedic injuries.

Last, but certainly not least, breakout sessions in cancer, GI/nutrition and genetic testing offered conference attendees the rare and treasured opportunity to address questions directly to the presenters and foremost experts in their respective fields.

Club members are heartily encouraged to participate in future conferences-- it is an educational opportunity not to be missed!