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Dear Schipperke Community,

I want to bring everyone up-to-speed on Embark testing – what we have done, what we are doing, what we plan to do, what we have learned thus far and how we have and are spending your most generous donations for this project. The advancement of Schipperke health and genetics is part of the stated mission of the Foundation. The Foundation has historically sponsored educational seminars and subsidized health testing for Schipperkes to further its efforts. The most recent effort in this regard is sponsoring the Schipperke Diversity Project, working with Embark to collect and test genetic material from Schipperkes.

As you may remember, we must reach 100 Schipperkes in the Embark database for them to work directly with us regarding issues we are dealing with in Schipperkes specifically, such as hemivertebrae, red coat syndrome, epilepsy, vestibular syndrome, cancer etc.

The SCA Rescue & Health Foundation, Inc., is using 100% of your donations, specified for this Embark project, to get us to the 100 mark. During the first phase, we fully subsidized the entire price of testing to bring the number to 50 dogs. We initially reached out to all SCA members via email to submit dogs for testing, both via email and in the Foundation newsletter. From there we took applications as they were submitted and approved all that were submitted, as a Board. We have test results back on the majority of them but a few are still being sent in and a few are undergoing processing at the lab, as we speak.

Very few SCA members submitted applications as during this phase it required them to release their results and pedigrees to the Foundation. Some expressed interest when a partial subsidy might be offered where they could keep their results confidential. That was the trade-off for full funding. It gave the Foundation valuable information across as varied pedigrees as possible from those submitted. All applications submitted were approved.

Owner submissions were required to sign a release, releasing those results to the Foundation directly, not the public. It is up to the actual owners of those dogs to share their results publicly, should they choose to do so. In light of that, there will be no public

release of a dogs or owners by the Foundation as this would be a breach of trust between the owner and the Foundation.

In the interest of transparency, I would like you all to know that we have spent, \$1,340.00, \$1,935.00 & \$1,935.00 for a total of \$5,210.00 towards the first 50 tests, directly with Embark. Please note, to date we have only received one disbursement from FB/Network for Good in the amount of \$2212.86. Their payment process is fairly slow. We have raised a total of around \$8,000. That is an approximate figure as FB/Network for Good will take their fee from each disbursement, so I am giving you an approximation since we have only received a small portion of the donations thus far.

We are entering the 2nd phase of testing for another 50 dogs. I am readying an email blast to announce it. The Foundation along with Embark are partially subsidizing the second set of 50 tests, so that participants can purchase them directly from Embark for \$69 (with a Foundation coupon code) instead of the \$179 each test normally costs. That is a \$110 discount per test. For the second set, the individual goes directly to the embarkvet.com website to place their order. The Foundation will not be made aware of the individual specific test results, their name or the dog's identity. It is all confidential between the owner and Embark. The owner gets a \$110 discount and the owner gets to maintain their confidentiality.

We will, however, be receiving quarterly reports, with test results in a generic format much like OFA does. For example, it will say during this quarter, 12 dogs tested positive (at risk) for von Willebrand Type 1, 5 dogs tested carrier for multifocal retinopathy and so on. I will be sharing those reports with you guys, too.

It will give us a good idea of what is a problem or becoming a problem in our breed that we may or may not even know about.

I can tell you that there are 3 things we have become aware of in our breed that we did not know of, and it is in pet/companion pedigrees & show pedigrees representing a vast amount of lineage. Now, it is by no means an epidemic, but we are seeing it several times in those 50 tests. For those of us who didn't even know it was there prior to this testing. Those three things are: both carriers and affected (at risk) for **von Willebrand Type 1** (a bleeding disorder), both carriers and affected (at risk) for **multifocal retinopathy** and the latest bleeding disorder, we have just seen once so far: carrier for **Factor VII Deficiency (F7 Exon 5)**.

We have not yet received our first such report from Embark, but when we do, as I said, we will share it with you.

Once we reach 100 dogs and start the 3rd phase (research phase), we will be calling on those of you with dogs who have been diagnosed with a particular condition, like hemivertebrae, red coat syndrome, etc., to participate by testing your dog and possibly any family members that are accessible. During this portion, affected dogs will be done at no charge. A kit will be mailed to you and you will mail it back to Embark directly.

Once we reach 100 dogs, our next goal will be 300, which will open even more options for our breed.

We already have two different families with hemivertebrae in the database, as well as a variety of cancer and will be receiving some samples with red coat syndrome.

Since our precious Niki has passed away, we wanted to state that we are so grateful to Arlien Kennedy for sharing her with us. We were able to get her test done prior to her crossing the bridge.

We have a couple of different vestibular dogs we are going to be testing. Those tests are on their way back in.

What is really cool is that they currently test for just over 160 genetic conditions and as they find new markers and are able to test for more, they continually go back to the dogs that were already tested and look to see if those markers were present in that dog. Then they will send you an update. Also, they will periodically send you an inquiry to see how your dog is, have they been diagnosed with anything since they were tested last, etc.

For those of you who participated in the fully subsidized portion, those are all in one account for the Foundation, which I moderate. All 50 tests come out on the same account. Since I am the account moderator it lists me as their owner. At this current time, Embark does not have a separate option for me to plug in the owner's name separately. It just defaults to mine when I add a dog.

Anytime Embark asks for an update on one of your dogs, I will send that on to you for a response that I will copy and paste back to Embark. I will basically serve as a facilitator for that portion.

Please know that we are working hard to ensure this does not fall through the cracks and that we make progress for our breed. There is no better breed!

If you have questions, always feel free to ask me directly. You can post it on FB too, just be sure and tag me. If I don't answer, assume that I didn't see it and you may have to message me. I would never ignore a question or concern. My email is bethalilly@gmail.com.

Also, if you have already made a donation, those ARE tax-deductible in the U.S. The Foundation is a 501c3 corporation. If you will send me your email address, our Treasurer will send you a receipt for your taxes. I have a list of names and donation amounts but many do not have an email address.

A special thanks to Gabriella for sharing Loki & Willow with us, to Sylvie Firary for sharing her precious Sigfrid with us prior to his crossing the bridge and to everyone who has thus far stepped up to test their Schip, donate to the testing and/or helped get the word out, you guys are truly amazing.

With all of your help going forward and with participation from the Schip community, in further testing and research, we stand the best chance of making a real difference in the lives of Schipperkes.