



Winn Feline Foundation and **Donegal Cattery** have joined forces to help unravel HCM (Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy) in the Persian cat breed. Researcher Gus Cothran, DVM at Texas A&M University has extensive DNA data from **Donegal Cattery** in addition to Ronan's diseased heart for the study he began in Persians in 2008.

A few Persian cat breeders have offered to help by sending DNA from their Persian cats. We need both affected and non-affected submissions with pedigrees. But the study needs funding via grants in order to continue. Winn Feline Foundation has set up a special fund for this effort (included in their list of funds on the donation forms) aptly named:

Persian HCM Fund.

How much do we need to raise?

Dr. Cothran is ready to write and submit a grant proposal. But research requires an enormous amount of money. For a breed-related study, we need to raise \$15,000 within 5 years or all the Persian HCM Funds will be transferred to the general fund and we will miss a tremendous opportunity. Once we reach that goal, Winn Feline Foundation will add up to \$7500 to that amount in the form of a research grant. As of March, 2014 we have only accumulated \$1100.

How important is this effort for HCM in the Persian Breed?

Numerous hours have been spent in this coalition and fund raising effort, and it baffles us as to why the response has been so meager with the Persian cat breed being the most popular breed in the Cat Fanciers' Association. Persian breeders joined forces to do this very thing for PKD (Polycystic Kidney Disease) over a decade ago and the genetic marker was discovered. If you don't think that HCM is just as prolific as PKD was with a 50% passing rate and only one parent affected, then think again.

HCM is responsible for numerous premature deaths worldwide in Persian cats. An estimated 40% of the Persian breed now carries the HCM gene. And newer breeds that involve Persians, in particular Exotics, may even be higher with its small gene pool.

**This is too important to ignore. No more procrastination.
Anyone can contribute.**

What has been done to facilitate this effort so far?

Victorian Gardens' breeder, Susan Youngman, had an inspiration for the creation of a special HCM/WFF banner used by permission from Winn Feline Foundation (see banner at the top of this page). As a part of that inspiration she offered the idea of making a contribution to the Persian HCM Fund with each sale honoring that kitten or cat. Victorian Gardens and Donegal Cattery have made that a standard for all kittens and cats we place. We are willing to allow use of this banner on breeders' web sites for those who are willing to do the same. Winn Feline Foundation contribution forms (both online and print) now include the Persian HCM Fund in their list of special designated funds.

Susan's inspiration has also led to the creation of a special form to honor a Persian cat that has died from HCM. You can contact Donegal Cattery on our Contact Us page for that form. Thank you, Susan, for these God-inspired contributions to the HCM effort.

We also have decided to extend our health guarantee for HCM through six years of age (with specific requirements), because we are doing EVERYTHING we can to breed heart healthy cats.

Susan will include this on her website and contracts. Donegal Cattery will include this with all contracts. You can request a copy of Donegal's HCM guarantee template through the Contact Us page inquiry on the Donegal web site. When you inquire with other breeders about a Persian kitten or cat, ask them if your purchase will lead to a contribution to the Persian HCM Fund. Then ask them about their HCM health guarantee.

Near the top of the Health Issues HCM page on my web site, just below the WFF link to this file, is a link to a list of breeders who are already pro-active in joining this effort by at least agreeing to have all their breeding cats scanned. Some have also indicated their intention to make a donation to the Persian HCM Fund for every kitten placement.

What can you do to help?

We welcome donations from anyone, especially owners and future owners of Himalayan and other Persian cats (including Exotics). Please become a part of this enormously important effort by making a contribution using the WFF donation link listed below.

All Persian breeders who are unwilling to help eliminate, or at least minimize this disease, by getting cardiac ultrasounds on their breeding cats and contributing to this essential research, are only perpetuating the problem.

BY ADOPTING ANY DONEGAL KITTY AND/OR A KITTY FROM A BREEDER ON OUR HCM SCREENING BREEDERS LIST, YOU WILL BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION FOR HCM IN PERSIAN CATS.

YOUR DONATIONS TO THE PERSIAN HCM FUND WILL HELP TO BRING THE RESEARCHER CLOSER TO DISCOVERING A GENETIC MARKER FOR HCM IN PERSIANS WHICH COULD LEAD TO A GENETIC TEST FOR BREEDERS.

BECOME A PART OF THE SOLUTION, NOT A PART OF THE PROBLEM.

Here is the link to Winn Feline Foundation's revised web site (2014) to learn about the Persian HCM Fund and make a donation. Print page 3 of this pdf to help follow the instructions.

www.winnfelinefoundation.org/giving/ways-to-give

Click on the *Stipulated Funds* tab,
then the *Persian HCM Research Fund* "Give Now" button.
You can then print the PDF donation form or donate online.

- 1) **Print a donation form.** On that form circle **Persian HCM Fund**. You can also choose "**honor a special person or cat,**" and the honoree (person) or owner of the honoree (cat) will be sent notification that a donation has been made in their honor.
- 2) **Donate online.** After the form downloads answer the following drop down menu questions in this manner:

How would you like your funds used?
Select: **I would like to choose a specific purpose or fund.**
Specific purpose:
Select: **Persian HCM Fund**

You can choose an honoree on this form by clicking on the following:

Is this gift "In honor of..." (a living cat, with or without HCM)

Click **Honor.**

In the drop down menu for "Select an honor program" click on:
Honor a special person or cat who brightens your day.
Then fill in the information for the honoree as listed in #1 above.

OR

"In memory of..." (a cat who lost its life to HCM)

Click **Memorial.**

In the drop down menu for "Select a memorial program"
Remember a special person or cat with a loving memorial.
Then fill in the information for the memorial recipient as listed in #1 above.

You will receive both an email and mailed receipt for your donation. Winn Feline Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization, so your donations should be tax deductible. We need any and all donations no matter how small. Thank you.