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To all Clumber Spaniel Fanciers:

There has been much discussion on several email lists lately concerning the CSHF and the role of Dr. Roe Froman, who currently serves as the Foundation's President. As she recently announced, she has taken a position with the Van Andel Research Institute. Due to the nature of these discussions and in order to address the questions posed by the organization's constituency, the CSHF Board of Directors finds it necessary to comment publicly on this issue.

As many of you know, the impetus for the formation of CSHF came from the Clumber Spaniel Club of America (CSCA). The two organizations maintain a relationship through their Memorandum of Understanding; among other things, CSHF manages the CSCA DNA Bank, while CSCA maintains a position on the CSHF Board (filled by the then-current CSCA Vice President) and provides CSHF with use of certain communications channels. However, CSHF is an independent entity formed primarily for the purpose of supporting canine research designed to benefit Clumber spaniels. The IRS has determined that CSHF is a tax-exempt public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

From its earliest days in 2007, CSHF has had a formal policy on conflicts of interest. It is important to note that the IRS does not require an organization to adopt a conflict of interest policy in order to obtain tax-exempt status; however, it does strongly encourage the adoption of a conflict of interest policy. This is widely seen as a "best practices" type of measure, which is the reason CSHF adopted and maintains its policy. This conflict of interest policy, together with the rest of CSHF's organizational documents, was disclosed to IRS as part of the application for tax-exempt status.

Dr. Froman disclosed to the CSHF Board earlier this year the possibility of a future affiliation with the VARI, so the Board has been aware of and considering this possibility for some time. Since learning that Dr. Froman had indeed gone to work at VARI, which she promptly disclosed, the Board has again discussed how that might affect her role with CSHF. Dr. Froman took no part in those discussions or in the Board's subsequent conclusions. After a careful assessment in accordance with its conflicts of interest policy, the Board is confident that Dr.

Froman has received no improper benefit from CSHF based on her involvement with the two organizations. Among other considerations, CSHF is not funding Dr. Froman's position.

The Board is also confident that its transactions with VARI are proper, in that they are in CSHF's best interest, for its own benefit and on terms that are fair and reasonable to CSHF.

Those transactions include the following:

- CSHF has solicited tumor and blood samples from Clumbers for VARI's canine hemangiosarcoma study; however, CSHF has not been asked to fund this study and has made no grants to VARI in connection with it.
- VARI now houses a portion of the CSCA DNA Bank (which CSHF manages pursuant to its Memorandum of Understanding with CSCA). This project was undertaken for the purpose of redundancy. The DNA Bank, formerly housed solely at University of Missouri, was split into two halves, with one half now residing at VARI and the other half continuing to reside with University of Missouri. Clumber owners can contribute DNA via either institution (details and instructions at www.clumberhealth.org); samples will be split so that redundant banks are maintained against the possibility of a catastrophic event affecting one institution or the other. A written agreement between CSHF and VARI governing the DNA Bank was disclosed to the CSCA Board at least year's annual CSCA Board meeting and is now part of a larger document that will govern all future collaborations between these institutions.
- VARI requested, and CSHF approved, a grant in the amount of \$2,332.80 to support the hiring of a student or other employee to catalog information relating to the DNA Bank. VARI subsequently returned a portion of those grant funds, because they were not fully consumed by the project upon its completion.
- The Board also recently voted to fund a study with VARI for the purpose of investigating the cause(s) of, and possible treatments for, IVDD. Many Clumber fanciers know IVDD as a life-threatening condition that may involve invasive and expensive surgical correction and that, all too often, results in the loss of a beloved Clumber. This important research was vetted through CSHF's Scientific Advisory Committee and enthusiastically supported by the Board. CSHF began exploring the possibility of such a study with Dr. Mark Neff, formerly of UC-Davis and a leading researcher in this field, prior to his recent affiliations with VARI, and is pleased to be working with him now.

Although it is a small organization run by volunteers, CSHF strives for excellence and is always looking for ways to improve. The Board has ambitious goals that we hope will benefit all Clumbers, and we appreciate the confidence placed in us by our donors in helping us reach these goals. As our constituency, we always welcome your inquiries and do our best to respond accurately, thoroughly and respectfully. Please feel free to contact any member of the Board with your comments and questions.