

I seldom respond to the discussions on this list, but feel perhaps a history lesson may be in order for the North American Breeders in regard to BCM. To my knowledge the first written description of this problem was in the old magazine "Dog News" in the early 1960's. Shortly after a dog named Ch. Marquam Hills Commanche was returned to his breeder (Dr. Robert Burke) from a campaign on the East Coast by Jane Kamp Forsyth, Dr. Burke wrote of Commanche experiencing "rare and strange heart problems", which he, and the Drs.--both human and animal-- at Stanford could not diagnose. Commanche was a Bang Away son whelped in 1957, out of Legacy of Clover Downs (a Bang-Away granddaughter). He died at six years of age, and was the sire of 26 champions. Legacy of Clover Downs was bred again in 1959 to a son of Bang Away, CH. Barge of Quality Hill, and from this breeding came a bitch named Ch. Marquam Hills Flamingo, purchased by Jane Kamp Forsyth for Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Hamilburg. Mingo was bred twice to Ch. Salgray's Battle Chief producing 7 champions--the "F" litter, Frolic, Flaming Ember, Flame Crest, Fanfare, Flying High and Fashion Plate and Memory Book from the second litter. Battle Chief was also by Barrage (a Bang Away son). Both Flying High and Fashion Plate were used extensively at stud, and several of the bitches produce champions. A Fashion Plate son, bred by Mike Millan of Canada, (out of a Flying High daughter), Ch. Millan's Fashion Hint, became a dominant sire in both the States and Canada and in turn produced several producers. In time, Mrs. Hamilburg became aware that some of her dogs, direct descendants from the "F" litter had problems and encouraged Dr. Gus Thornton of Angell Memorial Hospital in Boston to find out what the problem might be, later involving Dr. Neil Harpster. Thus, both Dr. Burke (Marquam Hill,) and Phyllis Hamilburg (Salgray) were probably the first breeders of note to recognize boxer heart problems and start searching for a cause. The common factor in these animals as you can see was Ch. Bang Away of Sirrah Crest, THE dominant Sire of the 1950's. I would doubt there are any boxers on the North American continent that do not have one of the aforementioned dogs in their pedigrees--several times. So this is a BREED problem, a problem that will take a great deal of time and research to eliminate, if that is

possible at all. We are just beginning, and by supporting the ongoing research funded by the Boxer Charitable Foundation, by paying close attention to the "history" in your pedigrees, and testing to eliminate the severely affected animals from your breeding program, ALL breeders will BEGIN to make a dent in this problem. Hiding your head in the sand won't make it go away. The mention of names of breeders and dogs is not intended to fix blame---these are merely the first boxer breeders who actually sought to find a cause for the problem. There can be no BLAME. If it must be affixed, it might as well be the founders of the breed, the Munich Boxer Club, or the cavemen that first domesticated dogs. We must find the genetic marker so that we KNOW what animals carry this trait and how it is inherited.

Ginny Shames & Ted Fickes
Arriba-Talisman
Springfield, Va.